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CLASSIC ROCK METAL HAMMER PRESENT

METALLICA

THE COMPLETE STORY
FROM THRASH KINGS TO METAL'S BIGGEST BAND

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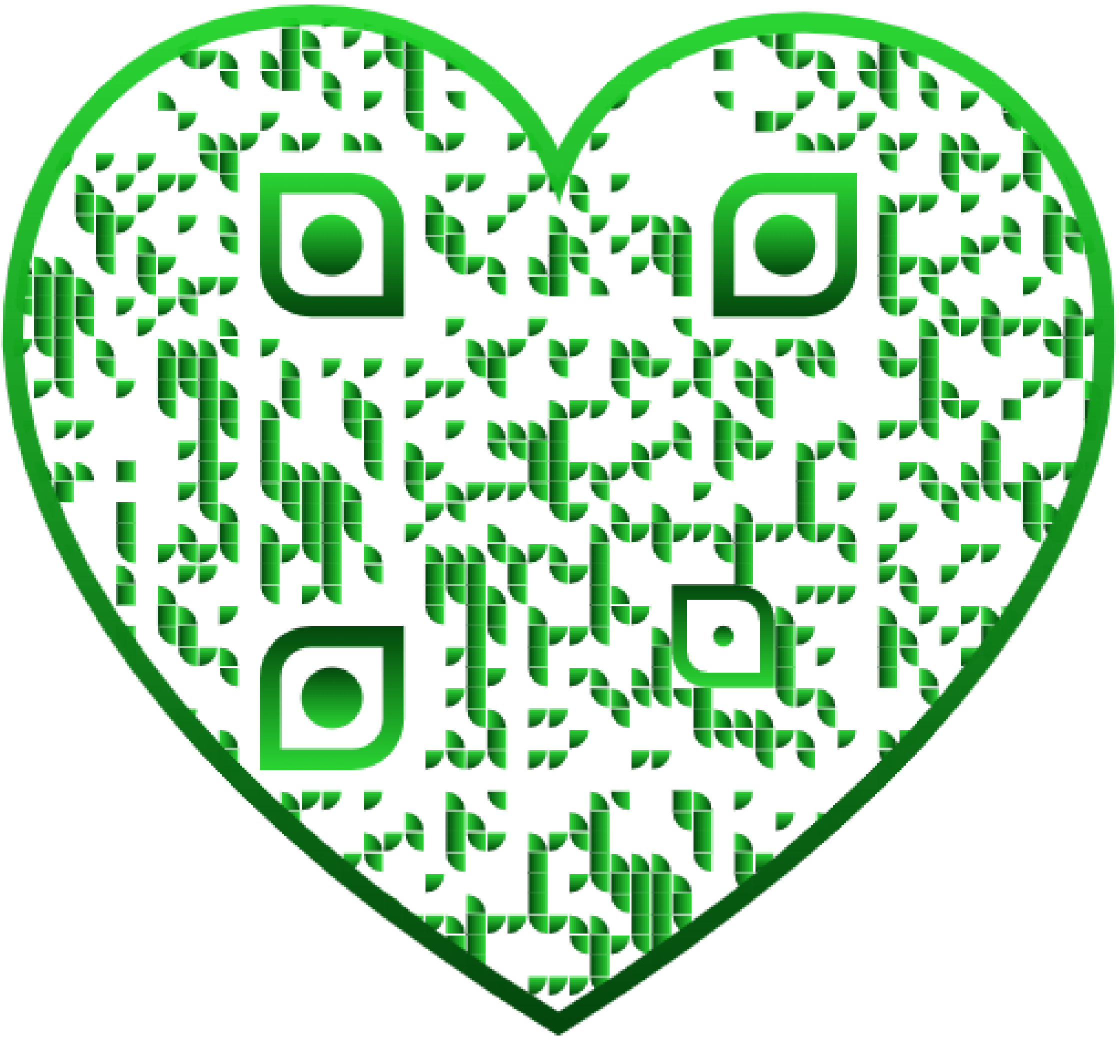

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Even if you'd been there, in San Francisco in 1981, watching this band of metal-obsessed long-hairs thrash their way through the songs that they were writing (*writing!* Like you could call what they were doing 'writing'!) for an album they hoped would be called 'Metal Up Your Ass', you probably could be forgiven for not foreseeing that, within a decade, Metallica would be one of the biggest-selling artists in the world. I mean, c'mon! With *that* music? *Those* guys? Yeah, right.

It would have been flat-out impossible to imagine that over 30 years later, they'd still be at the top of their game, *still* touring the world, *still* smashing box office records, as they did recently in the UK.

Like: who would have put money on this? How could you have guessed that music that brutal, or personalities that unpredictable could turn out to be genre-defining, multi-million-selling, stadium-filling rock gods? That they would become a band that would headline Glastonbury, that would make movies, or collaborate on an art-house album with Lou Reed?

We've all come a long way since 1981, but few bands have travelled as far – or had as much impact – as Metallica.

Luckily, the writers of *Classic Rock* and *Metal Hammer* have been chronicling this story from the start. Writing for other magazines initially, and then picking up the stories with the launch of *Metal Hammer* and *Classic Rock*, Metallica have graced countless front covers and filled acres of column inches over the years. Those stories are collected in the special bookazine you hold right now.

It's a remarkable story. Outrageous, funny, boozy, tragic, cruel, dirty, inspiring – the Metallidrama was played out in public and it's credit to the band's various members that they've been so open over the years.

But forget what they'd said. What's really amazing is what they *did*. Because, as grandiose as it sounds, Metallica actually changed the world.

The rise of Metallica proved that metal was a force to be reckoned with. In 1983, when their debut album was released, the biggest-selling records of the year were Michael Jackson's *Thriller*, Lionel Ritchie's *Can't Slow Down* and the *Flashdance* soundtrack. Faced with that banality, a record called *Kill 'Em All* struck a chord. Over the following years, this once tiny subculture and its brutal music connected like-minded people all over the world, creating an alternative to the mainstream *that was as big as the mainstream itself*.

This is the story of how that happened…

Scott Rowley, Editor In Chief

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The spoilt brat, the introvert, the big-mouth and 'the strangest-looking dude':

Metallica – the early years

Words: **Mick Wall**
Photographs: **Kevin Hodapp/Frank White**

The story so far: realising he is not going to emulate his father and have a successful career as a player on the international tennis circuit, Lars Ulrich, an 18-year-old spoiled brat from Copenhagen, latterly of Newport Beach, southern California, spends his days reading imported copies of UK music weekly *Sounds* and collecting obscure New Wave Of British Heavy Metal records. In the summer of 1981 he flies to England where he hooks up with NWOBHM stalwarts Diamond Head, a band so insignificant in the bigger picture that they view the arrival on their doorstep of their one and only American fan as such a novelty that guitarist Brian Tatler invites him to stay at his parents' house.

When Lars finally returns to the US some weeks later, he does so intent on forming his own NWOBHM-style band. Barely able to play the drums, and with only a small circle of equally nerdish friends to count on in the local tape-trading scene, in desperation Lars places an ad in local free-sheet *The Recycler*, appealing for any like-minded musos to get in touch. He gets exactly one response.

They say opposites attract. That was not the case when Lars Ulrich met James Hetfield in 1981. The only thing James appeared to have in common with Lars was their age.

Where Lars was small and doll-like, pretty-boy Euro-trash who ate with his mouth open and would go days without showering, James was tall and rangy, a full-blooded young American of Irish-German descent who brushed his teeth twice a day and wore clean underwear. Where Lars never shut up, James never used two words where none would do. Where Lars came from a background of money and travel, of music and art, of multilingual, open-door, hippy liberalism, James came from a plain-folks working-class family with strict fundamentalist religious beliefs, latterly an absentee father and, most recently and painfully, a deceased mother. Where Lars would push his way through any door, James stayed in the shadows, couldn't even bring himself to meet anyone in the eye.

A loner at high school, like Lars it was music that would finally bring James Hetfield into contact with other similarly obsessed classroom loners like Ron McGovney.

"There was the cheerleaders, the jocks, the marching-band people," Ron recalls. James had discovered rock via his two older half-brothers. "I was always looking for something other people didn't always dig. When I was into Black Sabbath, all my friends would go: 'Oh, my mom won't let me have that album.' So I had to go out and get it." Now he looked to form his own band. Encouraged by James, who'd used early piano lessons as a springboard to playing guitar, Ron started having lessons. "I knew nothing about bass." He just wanted to learn how to play *Stairway To Heaven*. James would be the UFO guy, tackling hard-line anthems like *Doctor, Doctor* and *Lights Out*.

Various high school bands ensued.

"My parents had a main house with three rental houses in the back," McGovney recalls. "They let James and me live in the middle house rent-free. We converted the garage into our rehearsal studio." Having left high school, they both had jobs now too, using their money to fund their latest group, Phantom Lord.

"I worked at my parents' truck repair shop during the day," recalls Ron. James had a job in "a sticker factory" called Santa Fe Springs. They used their first month's salaries to insulate the garage against noise, putting up dry wall, painting the rafters black and the ceiling silver.

In the final entry in his high school yearbook, under 'plans', Hetfield had written: 'Play music. Get rich.' As with most young bands, however, Phantom Lord splintered before it had even played a gig. They carried on under a series of different guises, the one most surprising being Leather Charm, a glam band featuring James as a pouting glam singer, even dropping guitar to concentrate on becoming a full-on frontman. Once again, however, the new band quickly fell apart. Then they saw the ad in *The Recycler*: 'Drummer looking for other metal musicians to jam with. Tygers Of Pan Tang, Diamond Head and Iron Maiden.' A meet was arranged but James thought the kid who had placed the ad "weird" and "smelled funny". He couldn't even really play drums. "We ate McDonald's, he ate herring," was how James summarised it 20 years later. "His father was famous. A rich, only child, spoiled – that's why he's got his mouth. Knows what he wants [and] gotten it his whole life."

Lars, though, sensed they might have more in common. "Even though we came from two different worlds we were both loners. And in each other we found something that just connected with something deeper." The first time James went to Lars' parents' house he was deeply impressed. "I was searching for people that I could identify with," said James. "There's a part of me that craves family and another part of me that just can't stand people." Unlike his own family home, where outsiders were rare, all were welcome here, differences celebrated, individualism prized. In Lars's bedroom there was a whole wall of records by groups James had never even heard of. He brought his tape-recorder, and filled cassettes with tracks by Venom, Motörhead, Saxon, Samson…

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James Hetfield on the Metal Up Their Ass Tour, Dover, New Jersey, April, 1983.

"Metallica Now 2nd In Popularity Only To Iron Maiden"
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"I bombarded James with all this new British stuff," Lars said, "and soon he was sold on getting something together that would stand out in the ocean of mediocrity."

Brian Slagel had been part of the same small NWOBHM coterie as Lars and other pals like Bob Nalbandian, Patrick Scott and John Kornarens. But since he'd been working in a record store and running his own fanzine, *The New Metal Revue*, he'd seen less of the guys. It wasn't until he was putting together a compilation album – inspired by the *Metal For Muthas* NWOBHM compilation in the UK – that he came into contact with Lars again. Tentatively titled *The New Heavy Metal Revue Presents… Metal Massacre*, it would comprise "all these local LA bands nobody else cared about". When Lars heard about it, "[he] called me up and said: 'Hey, if I put together a band can I be on your compilation album?' I said: 'Sure, why not?'"

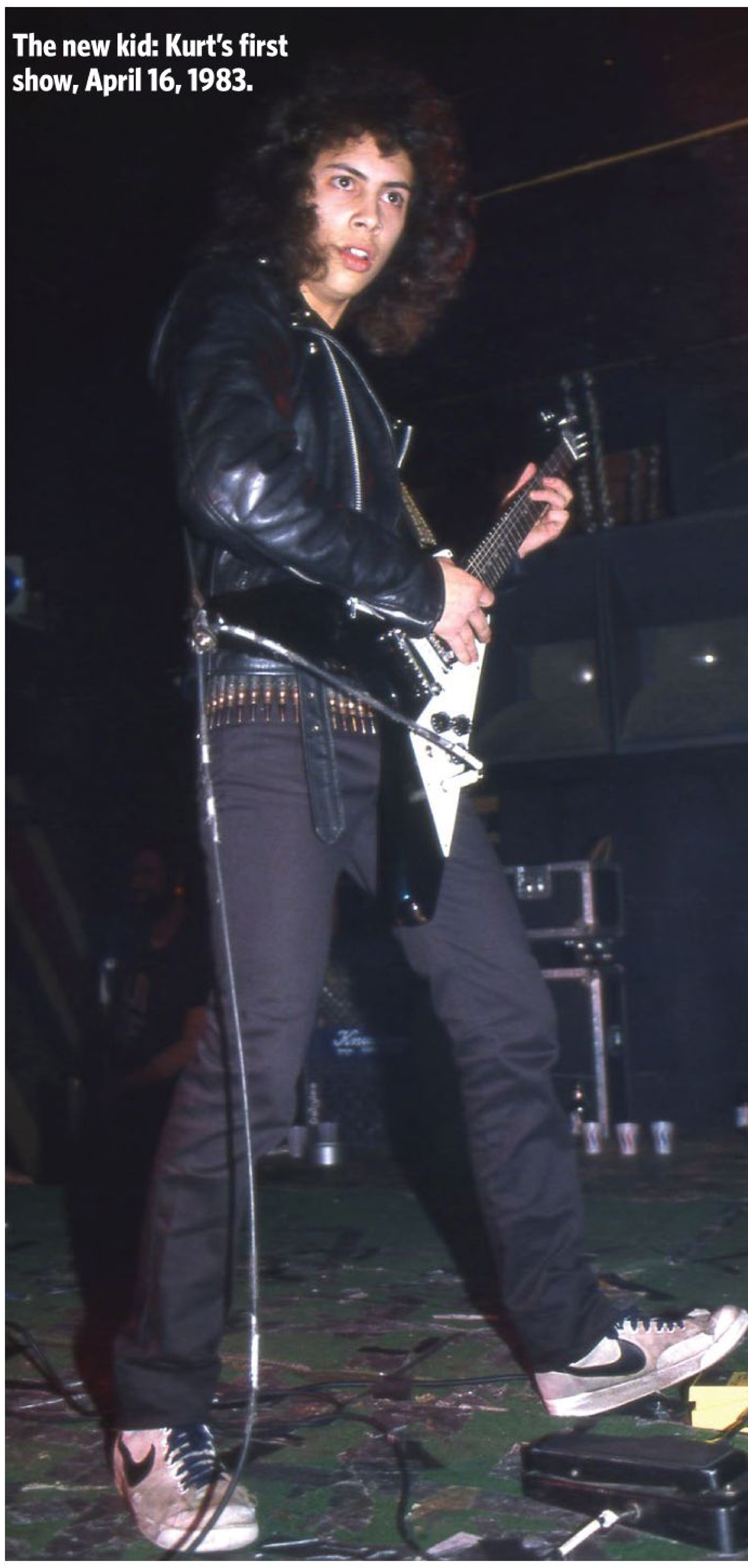
The only problem, says Slagel, was that "Metallica didn't exist, at that point". But Lars decided they didn't need a band, they just needed a demo-tape. Slagel heard no more until the day he and John Kornarens were at Bijou Studios, mastering the disc. At around three that afternoon, the door burst open and there stood their crazy little pal with the funny accent – holding a cassette of *Hit The Lights*. Brian laughs. "They recorded the song on this little cassette recorder that had like four channels. It wasn't really something you could put out. They did it basically the night before, just him and James [and] Lloyd Grant, James's guitar teacher, doing the lead." It had to be transferred to reel-to-reel tape, for which the studio charged $50. Slagel recalls: "Lars doesn't have $50, *I* don't have $50. Luckily John loaned us the 50 bucks so we could get the thing mastered and finished."

Although it would be months before initial pressings of *Metal Massacre* became available, now they had a tape to play people, Lars and James became determined to make Metallica a flesh-and-bones reality. First to join was McGovney. "My musical contribution was very limited," he recalls. "I played what James wanted me to play. I would just copy what he did." From the word go, Metallica was always "James and Lars' band".

James had yet to settle on his long-term role, vacillating between straightforward frontman like Steven Tyler, and being off to one side, head down, playing rhythm. Meanwhile, after another ad in *The Recycler*, they finally found a lead guitarist. His name was Dave Mustaine. Lars recalled: "I got a call from this guy and he was just so OTT: 'I got all this equipment; my own photographer, my own this, my own that.' He didn't have a clue what we were talking about musically, but he had enthusiasm. Everyone else in Hollywood was doing imitations." Dave Mustaine had no desire to imitate anybody. He was already his own biggest hero.

The classic product of an American broken home, Mustaine had grown up across several different locations in Southern California, his mother forced to keep moving to escape the abusive attentions of her only son's alcoholic father. By 1982 Dave was living alone in a dishevelled apartment in Huntington Beach, from which he sold weed. A tall, good-looking guy with a lot of reddish-blond hair and a lot more attitude, some said he was an asshole. Actually, most said he was an asshole. But if the contrived profanities and vulgar machismo were doomed to overshadow much of the brilliant music he would make

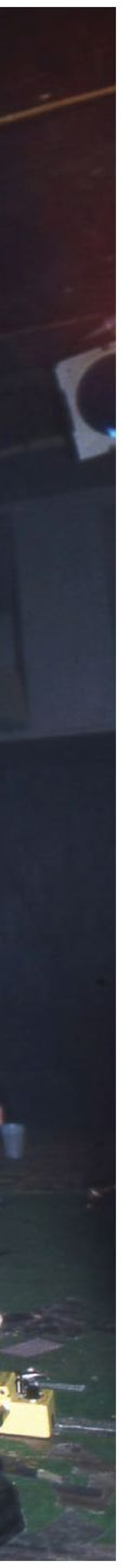
Hetfield, the blue-collar introvert, 1983.

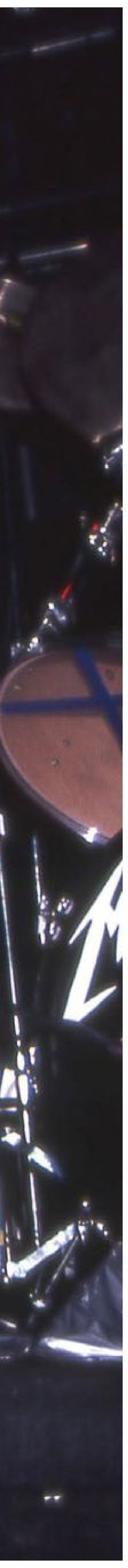


The new kid: Kurt's first show, April 16, 1983.

Cliff Burton, Staten Island, April, '83, five months after joining.

Dave Mustaine (right) played his last shows with Metallica, 8-9 April, 1983.





"He didn't have a clue what we doing musically, but he had enthusiasm."

– Lars Ulrich on recruiting Dave Mustaine

throughout his rarely dull career, Mustaine was also responsible for helping shape the early Metallica direction.

"'I think that James and I are very much the same man," Mustaine later reflected. "I think that we grabbed an angel, split him in half, and both of us are possessing that power." James soon began to see Dave less as a brother, though, and more of an evil twin. Whatever else he brought to the mix, though, "Pretty quickly [after Dave joined] things began to happen," said Lars.

With the four-man line-up established, the band played their first gigs, beginning with a shaky set at Radio City, in Anaheim, on March 14, 1982, where the set comprised a handful of Diamond Head covers posing as originals, interspersed with *Hit The Lights* and *Jump In The Fire*, a new Mustaine number, plus some obscure NWOBHM nuggets. More memorable were two sets opening for authentic NWOBHM royalty Saxon at the Whisky A Go Go a few weeks later. Slagel remembers James, still without a guitar to hide behind and wearing tight, leopard-print pants, being "so shy… you could tell he was a little intimidated". In his gig diary, Lars smugly noted: 'Dave and me played great. Ron and James so-so. Had a good time but never met Saxon.'

Three weeks after the release of *Metal Massacre*, in June 1982, Metallica went into the eight-track Chateau East studio to record what they hoped would be their first stand-alone release. But after hearing the seven-tracks High Velocity label owner Kenny Kane refused to release them (he'd assumed they were a punk band). Ever resourceful, Lars suggested they simply distribute the tracks themselves as a 'limited-edition' cassette titled *No Life Til Leather* (inspired by Motörhead's live *No Sleep Till Hammersmith* album, No.1 in the UK the summer before).

With its makeshift sleeve with liner notes by Lars, *No Life*… would burn a hole in the tape-trading scene. Its seven tracks – *Mechanix*, *Phantom Lord*, *Jump In The Fire* and *Metal Militia*, all credited to Hetfield, Ulrich and Mustaine, but which Mustaine later claimed he'd written the bulk of; *Motorbreath*, a leftover from Hetfield's days with Phantom Lord; *Seek And Destroy*, by James and Lars, 'inspired' by Diamond Head's *Dead Reckoning*; plus a new version of *Hit The Lights* featuring Mustaine and McGovney (though they cannily kept the original Lloyd Grant solo) – did everything an official EP might have, except garner reviews in the mainstream rock press. It made up for that by the sheer force of its word-of-mouth following.

Patrick Scott was enlisted to send out copies. "I had these pen pals like Metal Mike from *Aardshok*, and Bernard Doe [at *Metal Forces*], and they were just going nuts over Metallica… it was a fun time, running to the mailbox every day. Lars just kept giving me stuff to send out. He knew what he was doing." Though band operations still centred on Ron's parents' bungalow, it was the start of Lars taking over the band's profile and promotion. As he later boasted, conveniently omitting the role played by Scott and others: "I was the one who went out and bought all the tapes. I was the one who sat down and copied them. I was the one who sent them out to people. That's where it started. Somebody had to do it."

Musically, Metallica's influences were obvious to anyone acquainted with the NWOBHM scene. Yet at rehearsals, they would mix their Motörhead and Angel Witch records with The Ramones, Discharge, The Anti-Nowhere League, "and no one flinched," said James. "It all belonged together. It was aggressive, it had guitars. It felt good." Patrick Scott recalls introducing them to Accept's *Restless And Wild* album and the track *Fast As A Shark*. "They were bummed: 'Somebody beat us to it!'" It was

also Patrick that first played them Mercyful Fate. "James would play *Curse Of The Pharaohs* to get his guitar tone down. Mercyful Fate were a big influence: to be progressive with time-changes. They didn't want chord progressions, they wanted riffs. Ten riffs in one song…"

The arrival of Metallica and 'thrash metal' – the brush they quickly got tarred with – was a watershed moment. The end of heavy metal as it had become post-punk – either lugubrious rhythms dredged from a river setting the scene for jiggery-pokery lyrics about Satan and his followers, or self-conscious anthems full of whinnying guitars and blow-dried vocals – and the beginning of something new. Metallica were closest to Motörhead in terms of stripping rock back to its most vital components. But there was a comic aspect to Lemmy and his man-boys, a glint of the gold tooth that Metallica did not share.

Metallica were far more earnest, dressed head-to-foot in black, building their songs into musical movements before they could barely play their instruments. In time, thrash would become something to do with skateboarders and classic Marvel comic books, something to do with smoking pot and taking speed, with hellacious beer drinking, tattoos, piercings and dirty white sneakers. But originally it had nothing to do with any of that. It was simply about the obsession of a failed teenage tennis protégé with the early-80s new wave of British metal, and the fact that Metallica was quintessentially American. Ten years earlier Lars would have been just as happy drumming in a Deep Purple-style band. Ten years later he'd have been in his element in a Soundgarden or an Alice In Chains. It just so happened that in 1982, when he formed his first – and last – band, the music they set out to play was still so unheard of, so unlikely, he ended up inventing a whole new genre on his own.

Not that anyone in LA – where Mötley Crüe and Ratt were about to become the biggest names on the scene – had cottoned on to any of that yet. 'Played like shit!' Lars would note in his gig diary after another half-empty show at Radio City in June. At the Troubadour in July they went on so late everybody had gone home. While a show at the Whisky in August, where they 'started at 9.15 with no one around' was commemorated with one word in block caps: 'SHIT!'

Then in September 1982 Brian Slagel put on a dedicated *Metal Massacre* show in San Francisco, at a small club called the Stone. Nearly 200 people showed up and Metallica were the hit of the night. As Lars observed in his diary, it was Metallica's 'first real great gig. Real bangers, real fans, real encores.' *No Life*… had been big on the underground scene in SF; they were amazed to hear the audience actually singing some of the lyrics to the songs. Afterwards, some even asked for autographs! "It was a trip," says McGovney, "we couldn't believe it."

The band booked a follow-up show in San Francisco, at the Old Waldorf, for October. It was only a Monday night – the deadest night of the week – but they played it like a Saturday. They didn't even bother with the safety net of the Diamond Head covers this time, just went out and blasted through the *No Life*… demo plus new number, *No Remorse*. Again, "the people went nuts," Ron recalled. Among them, Gary Holt, guitarist in local San Francisco band Exodus, who would open for Metallica at a November show at the Old Waldorf – later immortalised on the live *Metal Up Your Ass* demo. He recalls: "They were great but really sloppy. Lars could barely play his drums and they were really drunk on stage. But they had this raw punk energy."

The only fly in the ointment was Mustaine. Ron, in particular, found the grating, confrontational Mustaine hard to handle. Ron was the one who borrowed his father's 1969 Ford Ranger so they could get to San Francisco; Dave was the one that dealt pot, stole beer and did all the talking on stage, acting like he was the leader of the band, not the newbie. That also made Ron "pissed as shit". There had already been several flashpoints between the two. Like the day Mustaine turned up with "his two pitbull puppies". Ron was aghast to discover the dogs "jumping all over my car" – a reconfigured 1972 Pontiac LeMans. Ron recalls James yelling: "Hey Dave! Get those fuckin' dogs off of Ron's car!" Dave yelled back: "What the fuck did you say? Don't you talk that way about my dogs!" A nasty brawl ensued. Ron recalls seeing Dave "punch James right across the mouth, so I jumped on Dave's back and he flipped me over on to the coffee table". James got to his feet and told Dave: "You're out of the fuckin' band!" The next day he was back, though. James and Lars, cowed at the prospect of having to find another guitar player, let him back in. Sooner or later, however, something would have to give. The surprise was that it would be Ron, not Dave, who was first out the door.

Dave Mustaine and fans. "At the time, Dave was an asshole..."

According to Slagel, McGovney's real difficulties revolved around his stunted abilities on bass. "Ron, as great a guy as he was, wasn't progressing as much as they were. So Lars came to me and said: 'Hey, we're thinking about looking for a bass player. Is there anybody you think that would be good for us?'" Brian immediately thought of Joey Vera, the Armored Saint bassist. But Joey was committed to his own band, who were about to sign to Chrysalis. Slagel came up with another idea.
"I told Lars: 'Look, there's this band called Trauma…'"

Trauma, from San Francisco, had a track on *Metal Massacre II*. "The band was pretty good," Slagel recalls, "but the bass player was *phenomenal*." When Trauma played in LA a couple of weeks later, Lars and James went with Slagel to the show. "Lars came up to me after and said: '*That* is going to be our bass player!' And when Lars says those sorts of things he seems to make them happen."

Trauma's bass player, Cliff Burton, was "the strangest-looking dude" Lars had ever seen, taking to the stage in bell-bottom jeans, his hair hippy-long, a little bum-fluff tash tickling his nose. But he really knew how to play the bass, eschewing plectrums for finger-picking, taking from obvious influences like Black Sabbath's Geezer Butler, Rush's Geddy Lee and Thin Lizzy's Phil Lynott, but also less obvious teachers like American jazz players Stanley Clark and Jaco Pastorius. Ever practical, Lars "started going to work on him immediately".

It wasn't just his playing that meant Ron's days were now numbered. When he suggested they get a manager to help shoulder the financial burden, the others just laughed, told him to lighten up. "Dave, at the time, was an asshole, and Lars only cared about himself. But what really hurt me was James, because he was my friend and he was siding with them and I suddenly became the outcast in the band." Speaking now, he admits:
"I suppose they all became tired of me and when they saw Cliff perform I guess they decided that he was the one. I saw the writing on the wall when we played San Francisco in November 1982 and Cliff was there hanging out with the guys while I was loading equipment. When we got back to LA I quit. It was probably a relief to the rest of the guys as well."

That final show with Ron on bass had been at the Mabuhay Gardens, on November 30. A bitter-sweet occasion as it was also one of the best Ron had done with them. "We had to get liquored-up to get on stage so obviously we could have been better [but] people who saw us in San Francisco say the

The new look Metallica with the Old Bridge Metal Militia, in Metal Joe's basement, Farmingdale New Jersey.

"His father was famous. A rich, spoiled only child – that's why he's got his mouth."

– James Hetfield's first impressions of Lars Ulrich

line-up with Dave and me in the band was fantastic." The set list that night also contained one of the first truly authentic new songs the band had worked up as a four-piece: *Whiplash* – punk-fast but with added bones stuck in the throat of the melody.

The drive back to LA though was hellish. "James, Lars and Dave were smashed out of their minds. They would constantly bang on the window for me to pull over so they could take a piss. All of a sudden I look over and see Lars lying in the middle of Interstate 5 on the double yellow line. I just said: 'Fuck this shit!'" When Ron discovered the next day that Dave had contemptuously poured beer on to the pickups of his Washburn bass, growling "I fuckin' hate Ron", it was the final straw. "I confronted the band and said 'Get the fuck out of my house!' I turned to James and said: 'I'm sorry, James, but you have to go too.' And they were gone within the next couple of days. They packed all their gear and moved to San Francisco." These days, he claims to be sanguine about the situation. But at the time he felt "double-crossed".

Burton laid down one condition to his joining Metallica: they would have to come to him. Cliff told them: "I like it up here. So they said: 'Yeah, well, we were thinking about doing that anyway.'" As Slagel says: "It was a very big deal." Not for Lars, "cos he was used to moving around anyway". But for James, "a guy that grew up in LA, and for that matter Mustaine, it really was day and night". As Lars would tell me, "Up in San Francisco… the Bay Area… we felt like we belonged there."

On their way they stopped off at Patrick Scott's house. "They came over to tell me goodbye," he says. It was a poignant moment for the school friends. Patrick knew he "probably wasn't going to see Lars again anytime soon. They said goodbye and hung out for a while and then they left." When they drove off, Patrick realised that "James had left his high school letterman jacket at my house. I called him and he said: 'Just throw it away; I don't really want it anymore.' But I still have it actually."

It was the week between Christmas and New Year 1982. The three had arranged to stay temporarily at the East Bay house of SF scene-maker Mark Whitaker. It was here, on December 28, where Metallica held their first all-night jam session with Cliff Burton. The four of them saw in 1983 by sitting round getting wasted on beer and pot and talking up their plans for the future. That was when Burton gave them his philosophy in typically Cliff-like shorthand. "When I started [playing music], I decided to devote my life to it and not get sidetracked by all the other bullshit life has to offer." Wise words the rest of Metallica would do their utmost to try and live by – even after Cliff had left them.

Enter Night: The Biography Of Metallica by Mick Wall is published by Orion.

Cliff Burton, James Hetfield, Kirk Hammett and Lars Ulrich – the men behind Kill 'Em All

Track listing

- 'Hit The Lights'
- 'The Four Horsemen'
- 'Motorbreath'
- 'Jump In The Fire'
- '(Anesthesia) Pulling Teeth'
- 'Whiplash'
- 'Phantom Lord'
- 'No Remorse'
- 'Seek & Destroy'
- 'Metal Militia'

METALLICA

JAMES HETFIELD: RHYTHM GUITAR/VOCALS
KIRK HAMMETT: LEAD GUITAR
CLIFF BURTON: BASS
LARS ULRICH: DRUMS
PRODUCED BY PAUL CURCIO

MAIN PIC GETTY - ALL OTHER PICS FRANK WHITE

THE STORY BEHIND...

Kill 'Em All

METALLICA

IT WAS 1983. Def Leppard's *Pyromania* was selling in its millions. Monsters Of Rock at Donington was headlined by Whitesnake. Quiet Riot were storming the US charts with a cover of Slade's *Come On Feel The Noize*. Accept were delivering state-of-the-art metal with *Restless & Wild*… and a young band from the Bay Area of San Francisco were about to turn the metal world on its head.

Words: Malcolm Dome and Jaan Uhelszki.

Metallica didn't exactly make an auspicious arrival. Danish émigré Lars Ulrich – a devotee of the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal – took out an advert in South California newspaper *The Recycler* at the end of 1980, looking for like-minded metalheads to start a band influenced by Iron Maiden, Diamond Head and the Tygers Of Pan Tang. James Hetfield answered the ad and, after a false start, drummer Lars and guitarist/vocalist James forged what was to become a legendary partnership.

After much chopping and changing, the pair were joined by guitarist/vocalist Dave Mustaine and bassist Cliff Burton and, with a buzz on the underground scene, they came to the attention of East Coast entrepreneur John Zazula, aka Johnny Z. "We sent them $1,500 to come across the country," recalls John. "They got a one-way rental: a U-Haul van and a truck. Literally, they had two drivers and they slept in the back with all their gear, and they arrived at my front door. It was basically, 'We're here. What do we do next?'"

This was April 1983. By the end of that month, the band had signed to Johnny Z's fledgling Megaforce label, were sleeping in a rehearsal space called The Music Building and had made the fateful decision to fire the unpredictable Dave Mustaine, hiring in his place Exodus's Kirk Hammett.

On May 10, the band went to Rochester, New York, to work with producer Paul Curcio at the Music America Studios on what was to be their debut album.

"The actual studio was in the basement of this huge old colonial-type of clubhouse," recalls Lars. "On the second floor there was a huge ballroom; perfect for getting a good drum sound. The problem was the place was fucking haunted – I had to have someone else up there the whole time I was recording. My cymbals would start spinning for no reason, shit like that. It was scary."

"Cliff said, 'Those record company fuckers. Kill 'em all'"
JAMES HETFIELD

While Lars dealt with possible ghosts, James and Kirk were busy getting the sort of guitar sound that would help Metallica stand apart from the growing young thrash crowd. "All the guitar stuff was recorded through James's magical, mythical Marshall," explains Kirk. "It was his first Marshall amp. I think he had it modified – it just had a really, really great sound. And I say 'magical, mythical Marshall' because it's not around anymore. Shortly after we did *Kill 'Em All* we were going to play some shows up in Boston, and someone broke into the truck and stole that Marshall."

Guitar-wise, neither musician was exactly blessed with an abundance of models from which to choose. In fact, each had just one guitar available. In James's case this was a white Flying V, while Kirk wielded a black Gibson Flying V. But they did the trick all the same.

"When we were tracking, so much time was spent tuning those guitars because we didn't have any back-up guitars or anything else," explains Kirk. "We didn't have any techs or roadies in the studio, so we pretty much had to change strings ourselves, tune it up ourselves. Which was fine for us because that's what we were used to at that point. We didn't have techs around us 24 hours a day like it seems we do now when we're in the studio."

But while Metallica dedicated themselves to ensuring that they could do the best possible job on the album, the wild youths within each of them occasionally reared

Cliff Burton: still greatly missed

James Hetfield with Dave Mustaine, before the latter was ditched in favour of Kirk (below)

their heads. Now, when they first arrived in New York, the band first stayed at the Zazulas' impressive mansion. All of this changed when the band broke into the family liquor cabinet and drank all the champagne – bottles that had been saved from Johnny's wedding to Marsha for a later date.

"They'd been saving it forever," explained a distinctly unrepentant James a couple of years later. "We popped the tops and drank it. That was it."

Now at Music America, they got back into their old habits – only even more so!

"We totally thrashed the place," admits Kirk. "I felt bad after a while. I don't want to get into it too much, but we pretty much never washed the dishes.

"It's four guys, you know? There was carpet in every single room including the kitchen and the bathrooms, and we drank pretty much 24 hours a day back then. So you can imagine how that turned out. Moist places shouldn't have rugs, but there were rugs, and people drinking a lot. It was a mess. But anyway, there was a loft above, on the second floor of the studio, and occasionally we put guitar amps in there for ambience, and I remember Cliff being in that room with all his amps, with headphones on, while he recorded *(Anesthesia) Pulling Teeth*, his bass solo. He literally was just standing in front of his amps."

This was Cliff's party piece, an astonishing piece of near-improvisation that immediately put Metallica into a different league from their contemporaries. After all, how many young bands would even consider putting a bass solo on an album? But, for Kirk, there was a certain logic.

"The studio was fucking haunted. It was scary!"

LARS ULRICH

Kirk perfected his 'rabbit in headlights' impression

"Well, first of all it was a great piece of music," he explains. "It was a stand-out piece. Cliff was just so out there, and he was such an original thinker that we just thought, 'Wow, what a cool idea!' You know, instead of a guitar solo, open guitar solo, you know, like Eddie Van Halen's *Eruption*. We had this fantastic bass solo that Cliff wrote, why not put it on the album? It started off being a part of the live show. He'd play it live to give everyone else a break, and then the drums would come in and he'd kind of solo against the drums."

There was one especially controversial song on the record: *The Four Horsemen*. This had started out as *The Mechanix*, written by Dave Mustaine and included on the seminal *No Life 'Til Leather* demo. When Dave was fired, the band completely re-wrote the lyrics, turning it from a song with overt sexual innuendos into a more apocalyptic vision.

Money, as one can imagine, was very tight at the time, and the studio budget only gave them from May 10-27 to record and mix everything. But in the usual scheme of things, the schedule proved to be almost too tight, as Kirk recalls:

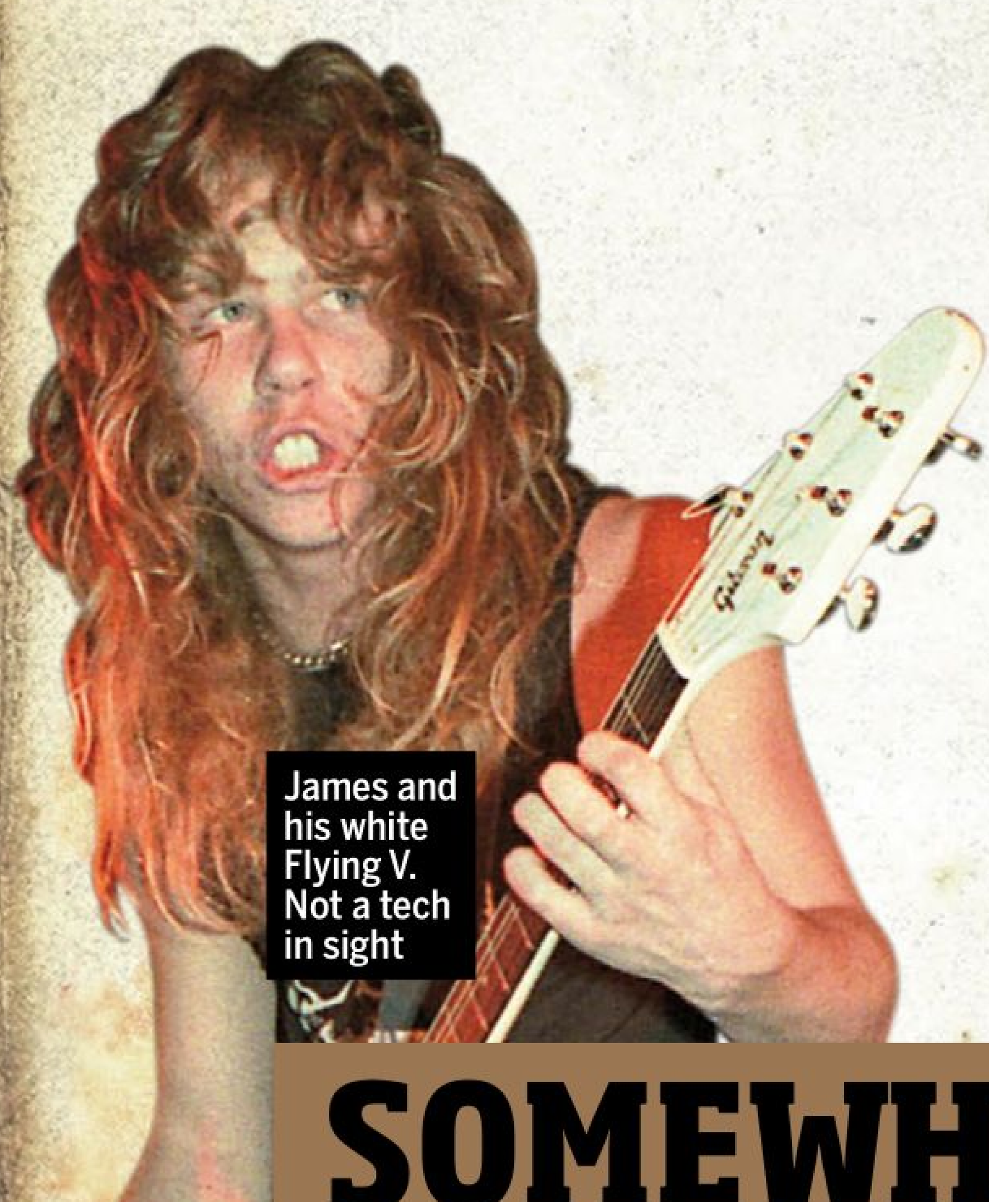
"We would work from the afternoon until about 11 or 12 or so at night. And then we would pretty much start drinking afterwards. And I remember I took about a week to do all my guitar solos. But I mean that's not like the entire day of doing guitar solos. That was like five or six hours of doing guitar solos, and then we'd go to something else.

"But when everything was recorded, the engineer (Chris Bubacz) and producer decided that they wanted to mix the album themselves, and pretty much locked us out of the studio while they were mixing it, and added all these weird delays and reverb and all these things that we wouldn't have done. That's why there's such a drastic sonic difference between *Kill 'Em All* and *Ride the Lightning*. There's a lot of things on *Kill 'Em All* that we just wouldn't have done. And there are also things that we had recorded which we'd have liked to have maybe fixed or re-recorded, but couldn't because of the time allowance. We were just running out of time."

But if there was a race to get the album finished, there was about to be another battle. Over the actual title. The band had always wanted to call it *Metal Up Your Ass*, which was the title of a live tape recorded in 1982 at the Old Waldorf in San Francisco. They even had a cover mocked up – a hand holding a machete coming through a toilet bowl. Not exactly mainstream, eh? And when word came back that the record distributors were refusing to handle such a sleeve, the band had to rethink their cunning plan. It was Cliff who came up with the alternative title,
as James acknowledged in 1986:

"Cliff said, 'Those record company fuckers. Kill 'em all!'"

The title stuck, along with the new cover, featuring a sledgehammer lying in a pool of blood – perhaps less graphic than the original idea, but just as gory.



James and his white Flying V. Not a tech in sight

THE NEXT CHAPTER...

Metallica's career has seen some real highs and lows. After taking thrash to greater levels with *Ride The Lighting* (1984) and *Master Of Puppets* (1986), the band suffered the shock of Cliff's death in a coach crash, only for Jason Newsted's arrival to herald a new era.

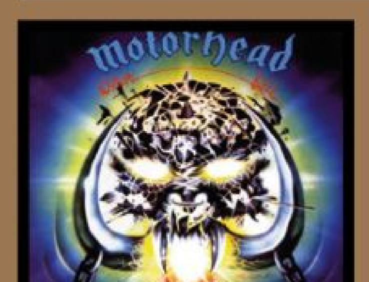
In 1990, they reached a vast new audience with *The Black Album*, which has gone on to sell over 14 million copies in America alone, making it the biggest metal record of all time. They also introduced the concept of the covers record into the genre, with the *$5.98 EP: Garage Days Re-Revisited* in 1987, and had fun playing club shows under a pseudonym and even supporting Metal Church at London's Marquee in 1990.

Even during the fallow musical period of *Load* (1996) *Re-Load* (1997), Metallica were big enough to headline every festival on the planet. But Jason's departure in 2001 led to their most decried album to date, 2003's *St. Anger*, and spill-all rockumentary *Some Kind Of Monster*, which exposed a band in seeming disarray.

We await, with fingers crossed and bated breath, the arrival of their first studio album in five years.

SOMEWHERE IN TIME

Where Metallica stand in the chain of inspiration

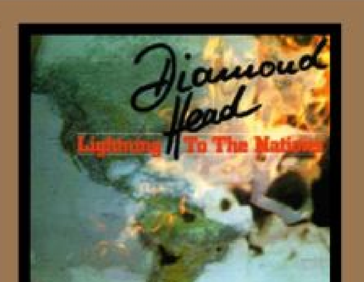


MOTORHEAD
Overkill

Lemmy's lads step on the throttle, melding punk and metal. A modern sound that heralded a new era for riff-tasters everywhere.

IRON MAIDEN
Iron Maiden

The NWOBHM writ large but also an album that stood above the genre. Power, passion, focus and some of the most iconic metal songs ever.



DIAMOND HEAD
Lighting To The Nations

A monumental slab of dynamic rock. Many felt the band were Zeppelin's successors. Yes, it's that good.

METALLICA
Kill 'Em All

Kill 'Em All is the record that dragged metal kicking and screaming into a new era. Put simply, Metallica sounded like no other band at the time. The four lads had a real energy and force that marked them out as being destined for greatness. Their riffs were inventive, their songs memorable, and the rawness of youth was a great strength.

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FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Metallica's pivotal 1984 album *Ride The Lightning* marked their transition from thrash wannabes into superstars in the making. But their peers – including rivals Exodus – weren't impressed…

Words: **Jon Wiederhorn**

Friday, January 13, 1984 was a bad day for Metallica. The crown princes of thrash metal had pulled into Boston, Massachusetts, where they were due to play a show at local sweatbox The Channel the following night. They had just returned from a much-needed two-week break from the relentless treadmill of playing, rehearsing, writing and drinking that seemingly hadn't stopped since the release of their landmark debut album *Kill 'Em All* six months earlier, and their spirits were high.

They were soon brought crashing down to earth. The night before the gig, on that ill-fated Friday the 13th, thieves broke into Metallica's equipment van outside the venue. Lars Ulrich's drum kit was stolen, as were frontman James Hetfield and guitarist Kirk Hammett's Marshall head cabinets. Financial inconvenience aside, the robbery temporarily stalled their momentum. Understandably, they were gutted.

But this particular cloud would have a silver lining. Bereft of his amp, James Hetfield picked up his acoustic guitar and began to write a melancholy arpeggiated melody and some uncharacteristically vulnerable lyrics: *'Life it seems will fade away, drifting further every day/Get lost within myself, nothing matters, no one else.'*

The sentiments may have been out of proportion to the crime, but the song that came out of it would be pivotal for Metallica. A seven-minute semi-acoustic suicide letter, *Fade To Black* was the controversial centrepiece of their second album, *Ride The Lightning*.

"If we'd been told when we were recording *Kill 'Em All* that we were gonna record a ballad on the next record, I'd have said, 'Fuck off!'" Hetfield later said.

Both the song and the album it appeared on were hugely significant for Metallica, putting clear water between them and the scene they had created, and pointing the way to a future where anything was possible. *Master Of Puppets* would be the album that broke Metallica two years later. But *Ride The Lightning* was the album that made them.

Metallica were already way ahead of the pack by the time *Kill 'Em All* was released in July 1983. They had been the first thrash band to bag a record deal (with up-and-coming US

Lightning riders: Kirk Hammett, James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich and Cliff Burton.

LFI/PHOTOSHOT

indie label Megaforce), they had already supported NWOBHM stars Venom at a one-off show, they were in the middle of a tour with another British band, Raven, and they were being fêted as heroes by the metal underground.

They even had their own base of operations – a house with its own garage-cum-studio, affectionately dubbed the 'Metallimansion', located north of San Francisco, in El Cerrito, California. Onlookers could have been forgiven for thinking Metallica were rolling in it.

"Before I went over there for the first time, I thought it was going to be this really nice place," recalls photographer Harald Oimoen, an early friend and champion of the band. "Of course, it was the furthest thing from that you could imagine – a total dive. They practised out in the back in a one-car garage that barely had enough room for a vehicle. At one point, they had to line the ground with milk crates and stand on those because whenever it rained the water leaked in and they didn't want to get electrocuted."

Dog's dinner: the mutt was unimpressed by Metallica's choice of takeaway.

Far from being a mansion, the house was only a few steps up from a hovel. Hetfield and Ulrich shared adjacent bedrooms, while a stained couch in the living room acted as a extra place for anyone who needed to crash.

"Anyone who would bring good, hard alcohol to the house was worshipped," recalls Ron Quintana, founder of *Metal Mania* fanzine and another friend of the band. "They couldn't even spell Stolichnaya, let alone afford it. Everyone was so poor, they were lucky if they could afford Smirnoff."

It was from the Metallimansion that the band planned their campaign for world domination, led from the back by the relentlessly go-getting Ulrich. But it became clear it wasn't just their groundbreaking music that separated Metallica from their rivals – it was their ambition too. Even as they watched the shockwaves from *Kill 'Em All* ripple outwards, the band knew that the follow-up had to move things forward once again. They wanted to grow beyond the speed demons who had popped up in the Bay Area in their wake.

"When you're playing fast all the time, you kind of limit what you can do musically," says Ulrich.

Metallica began working on the songs for their second album as soon as they returned from tour with Raven in September 1983. Their practice sessions were private. They were breaking new ground and they didn't want anyone to hear what they were doing before it was ready.

Locked in the garage, the band members were focused and determined, sometimes spending hours arguing about the proper placement for a rhythm shift or the tone of a mid-section. They rehearsed from noon to night, day after day, with few breaks. "We were determined," says Ulrich. "I can't say we were comfortable. The garage had no heat and it was cramped. There was no luxury there. Does it make for better art when you're uncomfortable like that? Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't. But when it came to the songs, we felt like we were on a roll."

"CLIFF AFFECTED US IN A LOT OF WAYS WITH HIS OPEN-MINDEDNESS. WE'D NEVER HAVE BECOME THE BAND WE WERE WITHOUT HIM."

LARS ULRICH

Cliff Burton was the key to Metallica's artistic development. The band had been so keen for the bassist to join that they had relocated to the Bay Area in order to secure his services. For Burton, this was an opportunity to demonstrate his ability as a player and songwriter. A fan of Frank Zappa, Lynyrd Skynyrd and classical music, he didn't just bring a new level of musicianship to the songs they were playing, he demolished the boundaries Metallica might otherwise have built around themselves.

"Cliff was the one who really taught them about melody," says Anthrax guitarist Scott Ian, who knew Metallica from their early days. "Cliff was the maestro. He was really accomplished and was thinking beyond thrash and metal. He always wore an R.E.M. T-shirt and a Lynyrd Skynyrd pin on his jean jacket, and that gives an idea of where his head was at."

"Cliff affected all of us in a lot of ways with his open-mindedness, and was responsible for a lot of the changes from *Kill 'Em All* to *Ride The Lightning*," Ulrich says. "We would never have become the band we were without him."

Burton was dragging the rest of Metallica in his wake, but it would be unfair to give him sole credit for upping their game. Hetfield and Ulrich strived to balance high-velocity tempos with new musical virtuosity, while Kirk Hammett was expanding his arsenal of tricks by taking lessons from virtuoso guitarist Joe Satriani. The directness of *Kill 'Em All* was being replaced by offbeat time signatures and unexpected tempo shifts. Just one album in and they were already busting out of the thrash ghetto.

As the band worked on new material, they scheduled sporadic shows to remind people they were still out there, and to test the water with the new material. They'd already showcased an incomplete version of the instrumental *The Call Of Ktulu* (then titled *When Hell Freezes Over*) on August 30 to a packed crowd at the Country Club in Reseda, California. On November 4, they returned to the Country Club, where they played a fleshed-out version of the song, as well as debuting

ROSS HALFIN

a fearsome new thrasher titled *Fight Fire With Fire* and the epic-in-waiting *Creeping Death*. Three days later, at The Stone in San Francisco, they added the song *Ride The Lightning* to their set.

The future was within touching distance.

Through the end of 1983, Metallica road-tested the new songs on audiences across America. The approval that greeted them only boosted the band's confidence. Even the robbery in Boston only temporarily halted them. Within a few days, their manager and Megaforce Records owner Jonny 'Z' Zazula had asked Scott Ian if they could use Anthrax's backline for the last couple of dates on the tour.

After they finished touring *Kill 'Em All*, Metallica remained on the East Coast to continue writing for the new album. There, they wrote *Trapped Under Ice*, *Escape* and most of *For Whom The Bell Tolls*. "We were in a cold cellar in nowheresville, New Jersey," recalls Ulrich. "We were cold and hungover all the time." [See boxout, right.]

But they were also sitting on gold, and they knew it. On February 20, following a handful of dates supporting Venom in Europe, Metallica holed up with producer Flemming Rasmussen in Copenhagen's Sweet Silence Studios to record *Ride The Lightning*.

Ulrich had suggested Rasmussen because he liked the producer's work on Rainbow's 1981 album *Difficult To Cure*. Being back in his old home town was hardly a drawback for the drummer, but there were other benefits too. Sweet Silence was cheaper than comparable studios in the United States and there were guest rooms where the band could stay while they worked on the record.

The first challenge for Rasmussen was finding amps to provide the appropriate crunch Hetfield and Hammett had with their old Marshalls.

"We got all of the people we knew that played metal music and had good Marshall amps and cabs," the producer later said. "We got them to come to the studio with their amps and cabs and we simply tried them until we found one that we thought sounded good."

With the amp problem solved, Rasmussen discovered a much more vexing issue. Ulrich played impressive fills, but when it came to keeping a beat, he played to his own internal rhythm, impulsively speeding up and slowing down as the songs progressed. "I thought he was absolutely useless," Rasmussen recalls. ▷

"THEY WERE YOUNG AND POLITE!"

In 1983, Victoria Calandra was the only person brave enough to give Metallica a home.

On May 20, 1983, Jon and Marsha Zazula received a letter of complaint from a local council jobsworth. The Zazulas, owners of Megaforce Records, had been allowing noisy, obnoxious rock'n'roll bands to stay, and rehearse, at their domestic abode – and it had to stop, warned the jobsworth. Net curtains were twitching and neighbours were complaining.

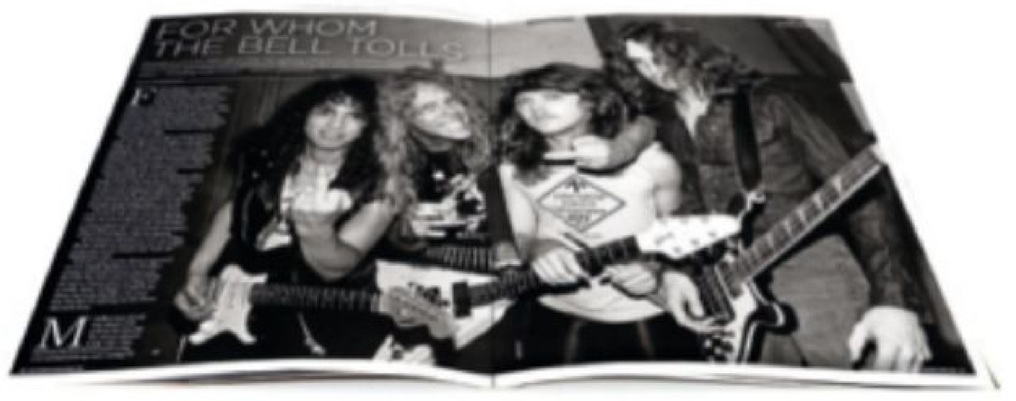
The timing of the letter was unfortunate, because one of Megaforce's bands – a fledgling act called Metallica – had just arrived in town and needed somewhere to hang out. So Jon and Marsha enlisted the help of Megaforce employee Victoria Calandra.

"Metallica were sent to my house in Cortland, New York," Calandra recalls. "We had no problem with the neighbours. It was an old Victorian house that was really built well. Dave Mustaine had just been given a bus ticket and sent back to California. Kirk Hammett was barely 21, and so shy and talented. And Cliff Burton was one of the sweetest guys I have ever met. They were very young and very respectful. I was their housemother, cook and hairdresser, and made sure they followed all the rules."

Having Metallica rehearse in her basement was a challenge, Calandra admits. "If they stayed in there after 11pm, I locked them in. James Hetfield broke through the door one night, however. They hung blankets on the walls and said it was really similar to where they jammed in California. They rehearsed for their first big tour while they stayed there."

The Megaforce bands who were sent over to Calandra's house after Metallica included Anthrax, Exciter, Overkill, TT Quick and Raven. "They stayed the longest," Calandra says. "They were there for three years."

Metallica



"The very first thing I asked when he started playing was, 'Does everything start on an upbeat?' And he went, 'What's an upbeat?'"

With the help of roadie Flemming Larsen, who played in the Danish thrash band Artillery, Rasmussen gave Ulrich a crash course in basic drumming. "We started telling him about beats. That they have to be an equal length of time between that hit, that hit and that hit, and you have to be able to count to four before you come in again. Then he could play a really good fill that nobody else had thought of doing at that time."

The majority of the eight songs that would make up the album had been written and were ready to record. The only one that wasn't fully arranged was the epic *For Whom The Bell Tolls*. After a bit of jamming, Burton inserted a flanged bass line between crashing power chords, fleshing out the song, and the band recorded the bell sound using an anvil and a metal bar. "We put it on a backstairs when we recorded it," Rasmussen says. "That was ridiculous – it weighed a ton. But Lars hit it and it sounded really good. That was before samplers, so we had to make our own sounds."

With impressive efficiency, the album was finished in less than a month. On March 14, when Metallica sat down to listen to the finished record, they knew they were sitting on something special.

They were already tearing up the thrash template. The album opened with a lush, 37-second classical guitar intro – heresy in those fast'n'furious times, even if it did give way to piledriving opener *Fight Fire With Fire*. If the crunching title track played it safe, then the faultless one-two of *For Whom The Bell Tolls* and *Fade To Black* were the sound of a band who were moving forward with utter disregard for what anyone thought of them.

The former was cinematic and grand, with a lengthy intro from Burton in which he added distortion and wah-wah effects on his bass. *Fade To Black* was something else entirely – the bruised, reflective ode to suicide written after the band's equipment was stolen a couple of months earlier. ("I'm sure I wasn't really thinking of killing myself," James Hetfield later said. "But it was my favourite Marshall amp!")

It wasn't just their musical boundaries that Metallica were expanding. Lyrically, they were rising above the juvenile concerns of *Kill 'Em All*, engaging with political and literary topics. They tackled the destructive potential of the arms race on *Fight Fire With Fire* and capital punishment on *Ride The Lightning* itself. *Call Of Ktulu* wore the influence of horror author H.P. Lovecraft, while *For Whom The Bell Tolls* took its title and subject matter from Ernest Hemingway's 1940 Spanish Civil War novel of the same name. *Metal Militia* it wasn't.

The album's most enduring song owed a debt to the biggest book of all: the Bible. *Creeping Death* retold *The Plague Of The Death Of The Firstborn* from the *Book Of Exodus*, from the perspective of the Angel Of Death. While the shadow of James Hetfield's strict religious upbringing hung over the lyrics, the spark came from a less divine source.

"James told me that they had a video cassette of [Cecil B. DeMille's 1956 biblical epic] *The Ten Commandments* at the studio and they watched it over and over," says Anthrax's Scott Ian. "The song's all about the plight of the Jews when they were slaves in Egypt and how God got revenge on the Egyptians by sending the Angel Of Death to kill their first-born sons. I think he felt he could relate to me because I was Jewish."

Metallica returned to the stage a fortnight after finishing the album, with a gig at London's Marquee Club on March 27, 1984 – their first ever UK show. Their next American gig wouldn't be until July 20, when they played a homecoming gig at San Francisco's Mabuhay Gardens, where they were received like homecoming heroes.

Exactly a week later, *Ride The Lightning* was released. The majority of their fans were thrilled by the growth that had taken the band from the adolescent thrash of the debut to this newer, more complex sound. Yet some purists were furious with the changes. The acoustic opening of *Fight Fire With Fire* and the near-commercial melody of the NWOBHM-influenced *Escape* were greeted with suspicion. And *Fade To Black* was seen as an outright betrayal.

> **"They couldn't spell Stolichnaya, let alone afford it. Everyone was so poor, they were lucky if they could afford Smirnoff."**
>
> **Ron Quintana**

"Lots of people hated it at first," says Ron Quintana. "Fans wanted them to do *Kill 'Em All* 20 per cent faster on the second album. These fans were into the newer, faster bands. In the Bay Area, many bands were still going for speed, speed, speed and a lot of people were following Exodus more."

Indeed, Exodus – the Bay Area bruisers from whom Kirk Hammett had been poached – instantly capitalised on what Metallica had done. They printed a T-shirt with a two-word slogan: 'No Ballads'. But then Exodus had a bigger axe to grind. Hammett had used a riff from their song *Impaler* in *Trapped Under Ice*. Worse, the *'Die by my hand!'* refrain from *Creeping Death* had originally appeared in another Exodus song, called *Die By His Hand*.

"I recall calling Kirk up and giving him a great deal of grief," Exodus guitarist Gary Holt later grumbled. "He said, 'Ah, I thought I asked you if it was OK.' I'm like, 'No, you didn't.' So I've had the pleasure – and I use the term loosely – of watching 60,000 people chant *'Die by my hand!'* at Metallica shows, yet I've never received a penny for it."

For everyone who hated what Metallica had done on *Ride The Lightning*, there were even more who loved it – including Anthrax's Scott Ian.

"It had a much denser sound and I couldn't get enough of it," he says. "Those guys were really happy with the album too, but it's funny – they hated the cover art. When we played Roseland with them in August 1984, they had the cover with them and they showed it to me. I have a photo with James and Kirk in the hotel room and James is holding his nose with a big thumbs-down."

More importantly, *Ride The Lightning* attracted the attention of some influential people. One was Michael Alago, a rising young A&R man at Elektra Records, the hip label that had once been home to The Doors, The Stooges and The MC5. Alago was so impressed with the album that he persuaded his superiors to let him try to sign Metallica.

"I saw them at that Roseland Ballroom show," says Alago. "I knew there were other A&R people there. So, basically, I bolted the door shut and wound up being the only one backstage early in the evening. I said, 'Look, I'm freaking out. I love you guys and you have to come to my office tomorrow.' Well, they got there bright and early. We were in the conference room. I ordered Chinese food and beer for them and we just sat there and talked. I think they liked that I was their age and that I was enthusiastic and that I'd take the right care of them, and I did, from day one."

Elektra reissued *Ride The Lightning* on August 15, making it the fastest and heaviest album ever released by a major label at that point. Inevitably, it prompted a feeding frenzy: suddenly every major label wanted their own thrash band and within 18 months, most had one.

The hardest bit might have been done, but that didn't mean Metallica were about to take their foot off the gas. With a new label behind them, as well as a new management company (Q Prime, who also looked after Def Leppard) in their corner, Metallica were rapidly becoming too big to fail. Though their stock was rising in the US, Europe was still their stronghold, and they returned across the Atlantic for the Bang That Head That Doesn't Bang Tour with gnarly British metallers Tank in support, climaxing with a triumphant gig at London's Lyceum on December 20.

Thirty years on, *Ride The Lightning* remains Metallica's most pivotal album. It was a gear change for the band themselves and thrash metal as a whole, proving there was an audience for both outside the sweaty clubs of the Bay Area. The hardcore fans might not have liked its more 'commercial' stylistic diversions, but the bands that followed certainly did – suddenly, every other thrash album started with an acoustic intro or had a weighty, introspective ballad in the middle of it.

Even Metallica themselves ripped it off. Their big breakthrough album, *Master Of Puppets*, followed exactly the same structural pattern when it came to pacing, from the opening thrasher to the complex instrumental towards the end. *Ride The Lightning* was more than just a stepping stone – without it, *Master Of Puppets* wouldn't exist in the shape the world knows.

"Metallica has always been about breaking boundaries and avoiding limitations," says Lars Ulrich. "Whenever we did something, we've always thought, 'Okay, what can we do next to be different?'"

Additional material: Enter Night: Metallica, The Biography by Mick Wall.

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The boys using their noodles in the Metalli-Mansion

BACK IN 1985, METALLICA COULDN'T HAVE BEEN FURTHER AWAY FROM THE STADIUM-PACKING BEHEMOTH THEY ARE TODAY. PUT THAT YEAR MARKED A SEMINAL POINT IN THEIR CAREER: 12 MONTHS THAT SAW THEM DRINK, FUCK AND FIGHT THEIR WAY THROUGH METAL'S LOWER RANKS WHILE GETTING ON WITH THE BUSINESS OF WRITING THE GREATEST METAL ALBUM OF ALL TIME. MORE THAN 30 YEARS ON FROM THE RELEASE OF **MASTER OF PUPPETS**, WE REVISIT A BAND ON THE EDGE OF GLORY...

GARAGE DAZE

WORDS: PAUL BRANNIGAN.
PICS: ROSS HALFIN

Cliff, Lars, Kirk and James: ready to take over the world

"LARS WAS CHARMING, KIRK HAD A BABYFACE... AND CLIFF HAD A BIG DICK"

PAPA HET HAS HIS BANDMATES' GROUPIE-CHARMING QUALITIES NAILED

James and Dimebag Darrell hanging at Dime and Vinnie's house in Arlington, TX, 1984

STUART TAYLOR/FRANK WHITE PHOTO AGENCY

As the final notes of Metal Militia melted into the night air, James Hetfield, Kirk Hammett, Cliff Burton and Lars Ulrich walked from the stage of London's Lyceum venue with broad smiles on their sweat-drenched faces. Tonight, the applause and cheers ringing around the grand old ballroom sounded particularly sweet. In their hearts, the members of Metallica knew that date 26 of the Ride The Lightning European tour had been far from their finest show of 1984, but with it being their final show of the year, the four young musicians were elated; buoyed not only by the approval of the 2,000 metalheads gathered inside the Grade II-listed building, but by the very welcome prospect of their imminent return to their beloved San Francisco to join friends and family for the Xmas holidays.

By any measure, 1984 had been a year to remember for the young upstarts, a year in which the international buzz around their band had been amplified from a whisper to a scream. Following a cruel January setback when thieves in Boston had relieved the band not only of their guitars, amps and drumkit, but also of the truck used to transport said equipment from gig to gig, Metallica had rallied to record an acclaimed second album, had toured Europe twice, scored their first major magazine covers, signed a seven-album deal with Elektra Records in the US and secured big-time management with former AC/DC manager Peter Mensch's Q Prime organisation. It's little wonder, then, that when Lars Ulrich spoke to the UK metal fanzine Metal Forces at the end of the year, the little Dane who'd willed Metallica into existence just three years earlier sounded so aggressively upbeat about the year to come.

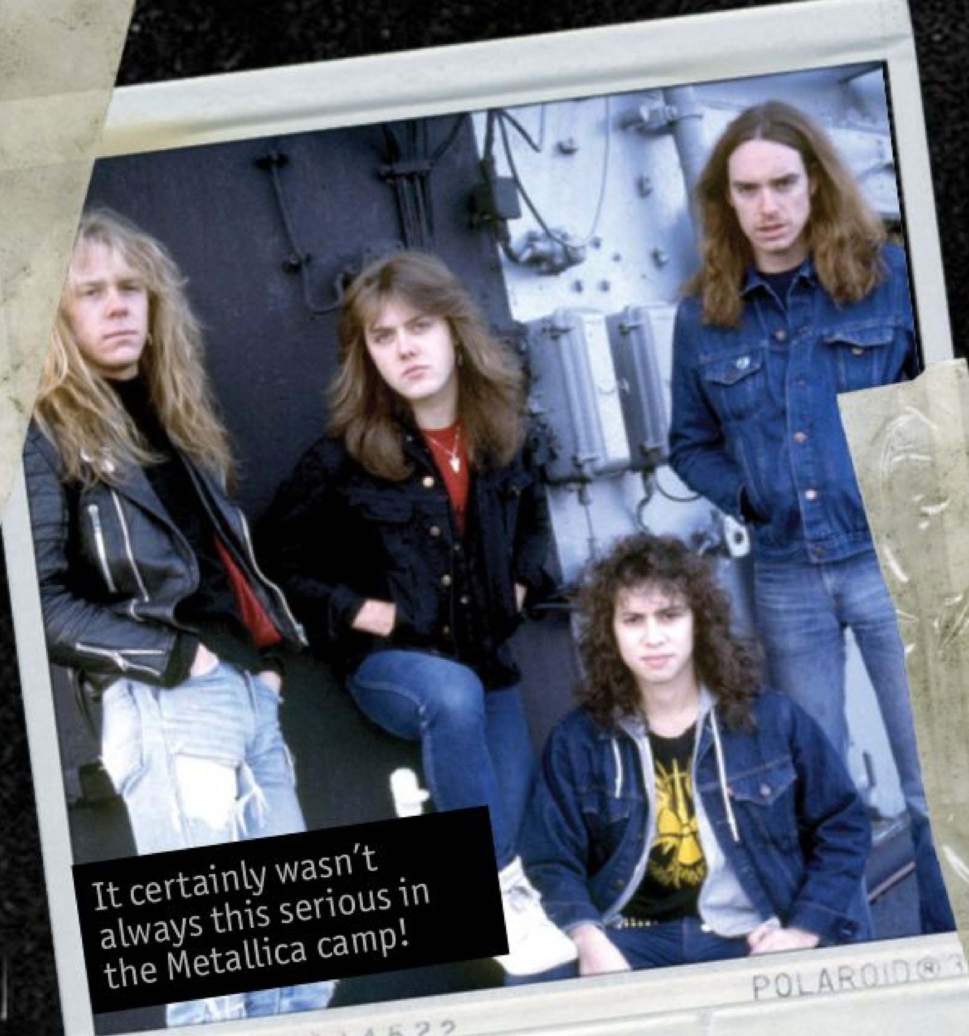
"IT WAS A WAR!"

WASP FRONTMAN BLACKIE LAWLESS RECALLS THE CHAOS OF TOURING WITH THE EIGHT-LEGGED BEAST KNOWN AS 'ALCOHOLICA'

"Cliff Burnstein, who signed us to our new management deal in the States, has this big belief that what we are doing will be the next big thing in heavy metal," he stated confidently. "I honestly believe that the kids who are into the Priest, Maiden, Kiss, and [Twisted] Sister will take onto what we're doing. I'm not saying it's something that's going to happen overnight, but it could start developing and Metallica could be the frontrunners of a new branch of heavy metal."

That, however, was for the future: on the night of December 20, 1984, Metallica had celebrating to do. As the four men opened their dressing room door, they were met with familiar faces and the unmistakable sound of champagne bottle corks being popped. The band's UK label, Music For Nations, had chosen this moment to present their young charges with silver discs to commemorate some 60,000 sales of Ride The Lightning across Europe – an achievement all the more striking for the fact that Metallica had yet to release a promo video or so much as a seven-inch single. When label boss Martin Hooker passed a foaming bottle of fizz to James Hetfield, the 21-year-old singer – by reputation, the least housetrained of the defiantly unreconstructed quartet – took one swig from the bottle and, to raucous cheers, let out a huge, noxious belch. The party lasted until the morning sun ushered in the beginning of the winter solstice: Metallica's homebound flight would be a rather more sober and sedate affair.

As 1985 began, Metallica turned their attention from Europe to their homeland, a nation in which they had played just a handful of shows during the previous year. Ever attentive to the musical landscape, Lars Ulrich recognised his band had lost some momentum on home soil at the precise point where metal was gaining traction in the US, acknowledging to journalists that his band "may have lost a little ground to other bands". This Metallica sought to rectify with the booking of a 50-date North American tour, taking in 19 states and Canada's five largest cities, in the company of LA rockers WASP and Armored Saint. It would be Metallica's longest tour to date. It would also be an undertaking on which the quartet cemented their reputation as the brightest stars on a resurgent US

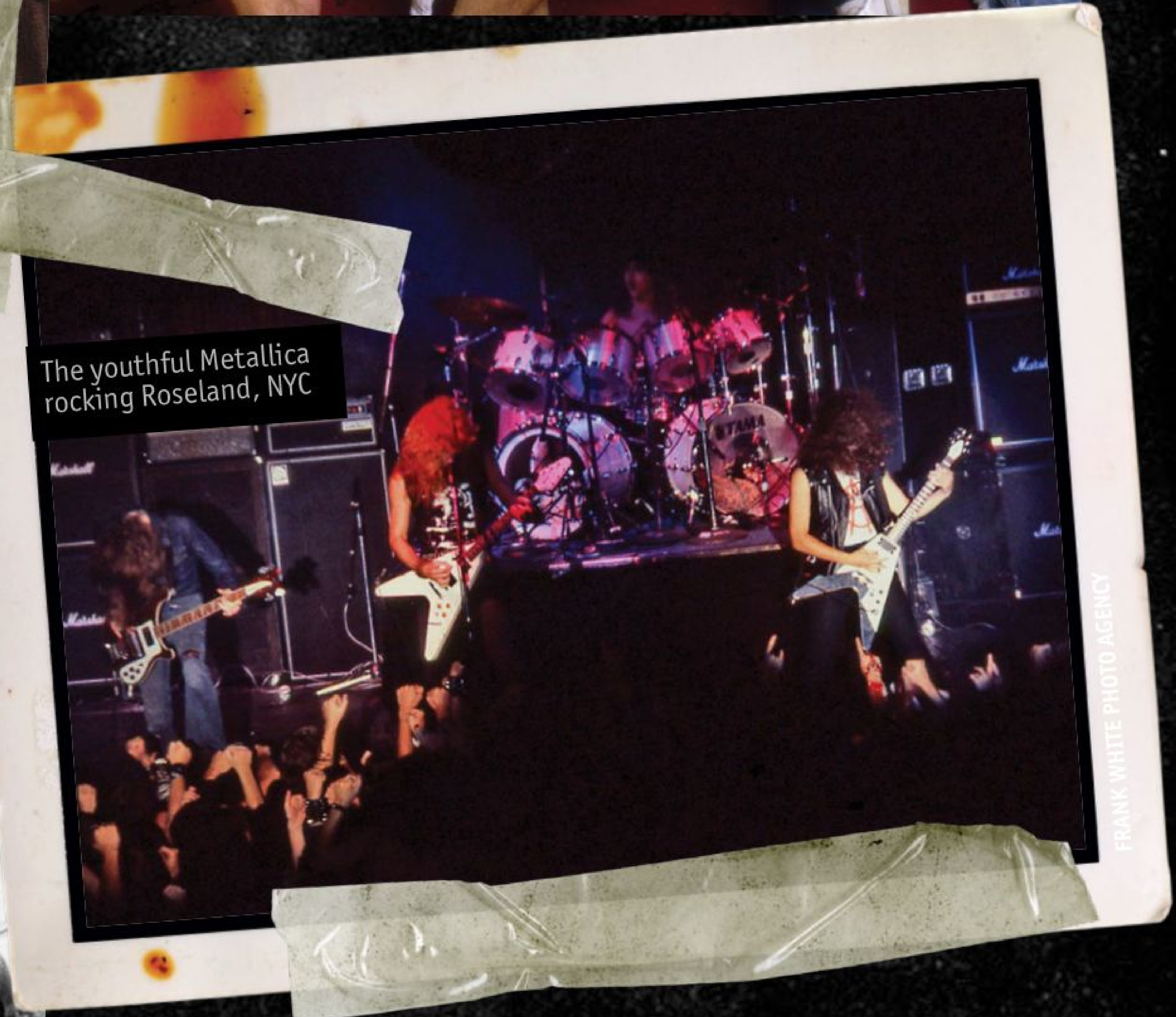


It certainly wasn't always this serious in the Metallica camp!

Lars smashes it at Donington, 1985

Something you ate, James?

Taking a quick break from partying and playing. Just a quick break, mind



The youthful Metallica rocking Roseland, NYC

FRANK WHITE PHOTO AGENCY

metal scene.

As the tour rolled from New York state to Philadelphia and Maryland before crossing into Canada, it became apparent that the caravan was attracting two separate audiences: those drawn to the showmanship, spectacle and schlock of headliners WASP, here representing the burgeoning 'hair metal' movement, and those who preferred their music rather more unrefined, aggressive and uncompromising, as typified by Metallica, and to a lesser extent, their friends in Armored Saint. If this division was not entirely a shock to Metallica – James and Lars had relocated from Los Angeles to San Francisco, after all, upon realising that Sunset Strip audiences were wholly indifferent to their raw, ferocious New Wave Of British Heavy Metal-inspired sound – it came as something of a revelation to WASP frontman Blackie Lawless, who regarded the nightly chaos in the rooms with some bemusement.

"It was like an invisible line [had been] drawn down the middle of the room," he commented. "Half was theirs, half was ours. It didn't matter what we were doing onstage. It looked like two opposing armies. Sometimes we just stopped what we were doing and watched.

"It was," he recalled, "a war."

For Metallica, the battle to win hearts and minds across America didn't cease when their nightly set ended. Just as the US hardcore punk scene had spread across the nation a few years earlier, so under-ground metal was steadily gaining a foothold in the blue-collar cities and towns which formed metal's heartland via tape-trading, fanzines such as The Headbanger, Metal Mania and Kick Ass Monthly and old fashioned word-of-mouth recommendations. Always his band's most vocal and passionate supporter, the indefatigable Lars made it his mission nightly to get amongst the denim-and-leather clad adolescents who made up the tour's core audience to spread the Metallica gospel, just as he'd done years earlier with the Bay Area 'bangers. What meagre rider the band were allocated was shared among the Metallica 'family' – fans, fanzine writers and friends in bands such as Anthrax, Pantera, Anvil and Metal Church, plus whoever else might be drawn into Lars's orbit. With drinks drained and confidence duly bolstered, inevitably, each night the members of Metallica would then turn their attention to the daughters of America...

"GIRLS WERE EVERYWHERE AS SOON AS WE STARTED PLAYING"

LARS ON THE, AHEM, PERKS OF TOURING STATESIDE

"The major difference between Europe and America at that time was the girls," Lars admitted. "In America girls were everywhere as soon as we started playing. On the Ride The Lightning tour, we'd done a run on Europe and maybe there were a couple of stragglers that showed up in Paris or Germany. Then we came to America and every show there were girls hanging around backstage and on the buses. It was every clichéd extravagance you can imagine."

"Back then, we all shared stuff," recalled James Hetfield. "'I did her. Dude, here! Have my chick.' Lars would charm them, talk his way into their pants. Kirk had a baby face that was appealing to the girls. And Cliff... he had a big dick. Word got around about that, I guess."

The band's tour bus was christened 'The Edna Express', 'Edna' being the codename applied to any young lady willing to spend intimate moments, however fleeting, with the feral, pissed-up metalheads newly arrived in town.

"Girls would come on the bus and just blow the whole bus," Lars recalled.

Times were tough in the early days...

"Like, 'OK, here's two girls, everybody get in line.' People would say, 'Eww, she just blew that other guy...' 'So? You don't have to put your tongue down her throat.' We all had pretty good pulling power, but some of us got a little more desperate than others. There were certainly times where it was about quantity rather than quality."

"Personal space was something of a rarity back then," said Kirk. "We'd stay in one room, two to a bed. We all switched around, everyone shared a bed with everyone else at some point. Being in a bed with Cliff was difficult because he had the boniest elbows and knees. With Lars there was always a third party in the bed. That kept me awake..."

"It was just so cool to be away from home, playing music, drinking and being with your buddies, with no responsibilities at all," Lars said years later. "That can't survive, of course, but those are great days to look back on."

On March 10, 1985, the tour rolled into LA for a sold-out show at the 4,000-capacity Hollywood Palladium. By then, WASP had jumped ship to support Iron Maiden (with whom they shared manager Rod Smallwood) on the English metal heroes' World Slavery Tour, so Metallica graciously handed Armored Saint the opportunity to headline their biggest ever hometown show. It would prove to be something of a mixed blessing for John Bush's band. "This show was the only time I've ever seen a band annihilate a headliner," recalls legendary rock photographer Ross Halfin, who was shooting the show for the now-defunct *Sounds* magazine. "Armored Saint just could not follow them. The first time I shot [Metallica] live was at the Lyceum and I thought they were so amateurish it was quite endearing and fun. [But that Palladium show] was the first time I really realised they were a serious force as a band."

In July '85, Halfin accepted an assignment from Q Prime's Peter Mensch to shoot the band at home in San Francisco – or more specifically, the East Bay city of El Cerrito. He'd be quite unprepared for the sight that greeted him. From the moment that LA emigres James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich moved into 3132 Carlson Boulevard, a two-bedroom bungalow owned by Exodus manager Mark Whitaker, in February 1983, the property was transformed into an 'anything goes' heavy metal bachelor pad. Posters of Motörhead, UFO and Iron Maiden were tacked to the walls, beer cans and empty spirits bottled lay strewn in every corner, and the whole place smelled as if a corpse was hidden beneath the floorboards. It was a shithole, but it was Metallica's shithole, and the house – the scene of Metallica's very first practise session with Cliff Burton in 1982, now sarcastically dubbed the 'Metallica Mansion' – became infamous in the Bay Area and beyond as the scene's premier party destination. Each and every night, the San Francisco 'Trues' – so-called because of their unswerving allegiance to 'true' metal acts such as Saxon, Priest and Maiden – would pile into the bungalow to continue the revelry started at thrash nights at dives such as Ruthie's Inn and The Stone, and rage 'til dawn and beyond. On the afternoon of July 25, Ross Halfin corralled the four bandmembers into the living room of the Metallica Mansion for a photo session. James, Lars, Kirk and Cliff squashed onto a filthy brown sofa beside a coffee table strewn with beer bottles, porn and that day's edition of the San Francisco Examiner, the headline of which announced to its readers that [actor Rock] 'Hudson Has AIDS'. The four unsmiling men regarded the visiting English snapper with expressions conveying nothing so much as pure disdain: in one celebrated still from the session, middle fingers are thrust defiantly into Ross's lens.

Here Metallica resemble a gang more than a band: four cocky little raggedy-arsed fucks with bad hair, bad skin and bad attitudes, with beer on their breath and the imminent prospect of violence on their minds. To the thousands of us teenage metal fans who'd view the image in years to come when

"IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D SEEN A SUPPORT BAND *ANNIHILATE* THE HEADLINER"

FAMED 'TALLICA PHOTOGRAPHER ROSS HALFIN ON THE DAY HE KNEW THE BAND WERE SET FOR BIG THINGS

Metallica drew a huge crowd at Donington 1985. Look at the state of that stage!

Exploring Donington's sacred field in '85

The band's rider has changed since the early days...

STATTERY

ALL THE CRUCIAL FACT BOMBS THAT MADE METALLICA'S YEAR SUCH A CLASSIC.

118 Days spent in the studio recording *Master Of Puppets*. Worth the wait, we reckon.

57 Total number of shows played by Metallica across 1985. An average of one every 6.4 days!

55,000 Number of punters estimated to be at Donington that summer.

100 Position *Ride The Lightning* peaked at on the Billboard 200 that March.

2 Covers recorded during the *Puppets* sessions with Cliff – Diamond Head's *The Prince* and Misfits' *Green Hell*! Neither were officially released.

DENVER, COLORADO Location of the hotel Metallica caused to be evacuated that summer after setting off a ton of fire alarms. Naughty.

FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE First song played live in '85 (Jan 10, NY)

BLITZKRIEG Last song played live in '85 (Dec 31, CA)

FEBRUARY 9 Date Metallica played *Fade To Black* for the first time. Despite being thrash's first 'ballad', it went down pretty well!

1 Number of pig heads thrown onstage during their set at Donington. Poor bastard.

3132 Address of the Metallica Mansion on Carlson Boulevard and the spiritual home of Bay Area partying. We're hungover just thinking about it.

INSIDE THE METALLI-MANSION

WE HEAD INSIDE METALLICA'S INFAMOUS DEN FOR A GLIMPSE AT THE LIFE OF A BAND SET TO CHANGE IT ALL...

Kirk struts his stuff at Monsters Of Rock in 1985

it was chosen for the inner sleeve of the band's third album, they looked like the coolest band in the world. Here, finally, was a band to believe in, a bunch of scruffy no-marks who looked Just. Like. Us. The big difference, however, was that none of us had spent the previous two months writing one of the greatest heavy metal albums of all time in the one-car garage at 3132 Carlson Boulevard...

"I'd like to say that there was something magical in the air in the summer we wrote Master of Puppets, something that hadn't been there before and has never existed since," Lars told Hammer as that landmark release celebrated its 20th anniversary. "But that would be a lie. I guess we just had the right attitude and the right openness to ideas. The whole band was getting more confident.

"Most of the record was written in May and June of 1985, from the best ideas that were kicking around on our riff tapes from the previous year. It really wasn't any different this time than before – it'd basically be me and James sitting down with a bunch of tapes and sorting through the details of his ideas and my ideas and Kirk's ideas. But Cliff had [also] been in the band for a few years and he brought in a lot of harmonies and melodies. It took a little while for James and I to open up to some of Cliff's ideas about harmony and melody because we'd never played stuff like that before. But after a while we got it and that's when we started experimenting more."

Guitarist Kirk Hammett was a little more nostalgic as he recalled working on the group's new songs in their El Cerrito garage.

AMSTEL BIER BANNER

Well, they were dubbed 'Alcoholica' for a reason! Setting the tone for the place they called home for all those months, we can only assume that this was ruthlessly purloined from a festival somewhere…

ENFER MAGAZINE

The June '85 issue of the French metal mainstay, to be precise, featuring Scorpions on the cover and a feature on the mighty Judas Priest! We can't imagine what Metallica saw in it…

DAY ON THE GREEN FLIER

One of the US's biggest festivals that year, Oakland's Day On The Green featured a glam-flavoured bill that also included Scorpions in their pomp, not to mention sleaze rockers Ratt, Yngwie Malmsteen's Rising Force and Y&T!

MICHAEL JOHANSSON / ATLASICONS.COM

Backstage in 1984, ready to get the job done

Lars rocking the denim and leather at Monsters Of Rock

James gazing out at the Donington faithful

"When we started getting the songs together and rehearsing them, I can remember getting a huge lump in my throat, just from the emotion from playing these great tunes," he recalled.

"There wasn't anything left over from the Ride The Lightning stuff," Kirk told biographer Mick Wall. "It was pretty much the definitive musical statement from that lineup, and it felt like it. We'd really gotten to know each other's musical capabilities and temperaments over that three-year period, and I could tell it was really blossoming into something that was to be reckoned with. Every song we came up with was just the greatest thing. Every time we'd write another it was like, 'Oh my God!'"

That same summer, Metallica received an invitation to play what would be, up to that point, the biggest show of their young career. The Monsters of Rock festival, held annually since 1980, was a one-day metal festival held at Donington Park, in the East Midlands: the event's first outing was headlined by Rainbow, with legendary artists such as AC/DC, Van Halen, ZZ Top, Ozzy Osbourne and Whitesnake featuring on the loudest bill of the English summer in subsequent years. For Metallica, this was virgin territory: they had yet to play a UK show outside London, and had yet to grace an outdoor festival bill anywhere in the world at this point. The invitation was immediately accepted.

The Monsters Of Rock bill assembled on Saturday, August 17, 1985 was one of the more varied and diverse lineups ever to grace Donington Park. With ZZ Top installed as the headline attraction, Metallica were sandwiched between LA's Ratt and New Jersey pretty boys Bon Jovi halfway down the bill, with English prog rockers Marillion and Magnum completing the lineup. The San Francisco band were clearly out of place in such company, a fact which only hardened their resolve to make an impression at what was then the world's most prestigious rock/metal all-dayer. Sitting in a Midlands hotel on the eve of the show, the ever-voluble Lars would tell anyone prepared to listen that his band "were in the mood to kill."

That much was evident when the quartet stepped out onto the Monsters Of Rock stage. Following an opening assault of Creeping Death and Ride The Lightning, James Hetfield approached the centre stage mic to address the crowd for the first time.

"We're Metallica, and I have to tell you something from the start," he told the 55,000 people gathered under slate-grey skies. "If you came here to see Spandex and fucking eye make-up and all that shit, and the words 'Rock'n'roll baby' in every fucking song, this ain't the fucking band. We came here to bang some fucking heads for 50 minutes... are you fucking with us?!"

As the crowd roared their assent, Cliff Burton cranked into the opening of For Whom The Bell Tolls and Metallica kicked into gear once more. The Four Horsemen and Fade To Black followed before James stepped to the mic once again.

"It's cool if you throw shit, but don't hit our fucking beers... that's our fuel," he laughed, ahead of Seek And Destroy. "This next one is about getting fucking faceless and causing some senseless destruction. There's nothing like a little senseless destruction is there?"

By the time James bid the Donington crowd farewell three songs later, Metallica had found their spiritual home. The quartet's final show of the summer would be no less significant, as they accepted promoter Bill Graham's invitation to appear on the opening day of the prestigious Day On The Green festival in Oakland. The bill on August 31 featured headliners Scorpions, with Ratt, Oakland's own Y&T, Swedish guitar hero Yngwie J Malmsteen's Rising Force and German metallers Victory in support; Metallica's slot was two places beneath that of the headliners. Playing an identical nine-song set to that aired two weeks previously at Donington, the local boys stole the show.

"WE STARTED REHEARSING AND I GOT A HUGE LUMP IN MY THROAT"

KIRK KNEW METALLICA WERE ONTO A WINNER WHEN THEY JAMMED ...*PUPPETS* FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME

"I remember watching the band's set that day and being made really aware of just how popular they might eventually become," recalls Metal Hammer's own Malcolm Dome, in town to review the show. "The response they got from the crowd was phenomenal. It would have been phenomenal if they'd had an album that was in the Top 20, or if they'd had a single on the chart, or a video being played on MTV – but they had none of these things. All they had was a growing word of mouth, which meant that people in the stadium who hadn't seen them play before had a real sense of anticipation

1985: THE YEAR IN METAL

"HEEEEEERE'S METALLICA!"

about what might be in store. It was obvious that this wasn't just 'A N Other' band."

Metallica celebrated their triumphant homecoming the only way they knew how: by getting shitface-wasted and engaging in a little "senseless destruction" of their own, trashing their dressing room with the assistance of the Bay Area 'Trues.' Bill Graham was less than impressed. The veteran promoter took ring-leader James aside for a 'tune-up'. "This attitude you have, I've had the same conversation with Sid Vicious and Keith Moon," he told the shame-faced singer. James's goofy grin disappeared when he realised that Bill's decision to bracket him alongside two now-deceased hell-raisers was intended as a warning.

"I realised at that point there was more to being in a band than pissing people off and smashing shit up," the contrite singer later confessed.

The following day, on September 1, James, Lars and Kirk left San Francisco International Airport, bound for Copenhagen: two days later, joined by Cliff at Sweet Silence studio and reunited with Ride The Lightning producer Flemming Rasmussen, they began work on what would be their third album. As with the sessions which yielded Ride The Lightning, work upon the quartet's third opus began at seven o' clock each evening and stretched until the break of dawn. Before each shift commenced, though, the musicians would first eat dinner at the home Flemming shared with his wife, Permille, the producer recalling, perhaps with a little surprise, that his guests were "really quiet and really nice." Equally impressive was the obvious progression each musician had made since they were last in the Dane's company. "They had made such massive strides," remembers Flemming. "Technically, as musicians it was very obvious that they'd spent most of the time since we'd recorded Ride The Lightning on tour. It was very obvious that their technical abilities had really improved, especially Lars, who was just miles better than he was before."

"Master Of Puppets is definitely a more uncommercial album than Ride The Lightning," the producer argues. "Master Of Puppets is Metallica celebrating that they've got a major label deal and that they no longer give a shit. It was them saying, 'We're just going to do the stuff we like

GUNS AND ROSES: JACK LUE/ATLASICONS.COM

1985 WAS A HUGELY SIGNIFICANT 12 MONTHS FOR OUR WORLD. HERE ARE 10 KEY EVENTS FROM THAT YEAR THAT HELPED TO SHAPE THE FACE OF MUSIC…

DAVID LEE ROTH WALKS OUT OF VAN HALEN

Van Halen's sixth studio album (styled as *MCMLXXXIV* on its front cover) turned the Pasadena party-metal quartet into the biggest rock band in the world… and gave motormouth frontman David Lee Roth the perfect platform to quit the band and strike out on his own. He'd be back…

ZEPPELIN AND SABBATH REFORM

Well, for one day at least. Whether incentivised by Bob Geldof's stirring words or simply by the opportunity to perform to a global TV audience numbered in the tens of millions, Led Zep and Black Sabbath regrouped to play Philadelphia's John F. Kennedy Stadium on July 13, 1985. Neither act covered themselves in glory; indeed, Zeppelin's performance was so shoddy that stand-in drummer Phil Collins considered walking off-stage mid-set.

AEROSMITH'S CLASSIC LINEUP RETURNS TOO

Ego clashes and drug-fuelled arguments caused Joe Perry and Brad Whitford to walk away from Aerosmith, but in '85 the old gang came together for the *Done With Mirrors* album. In truth, the comeback was underwhelming: two years later, with *Permanent Vacation*, the magic truly returned.

'MOST DANGEROUS BAND IN THE WORLD' FORM

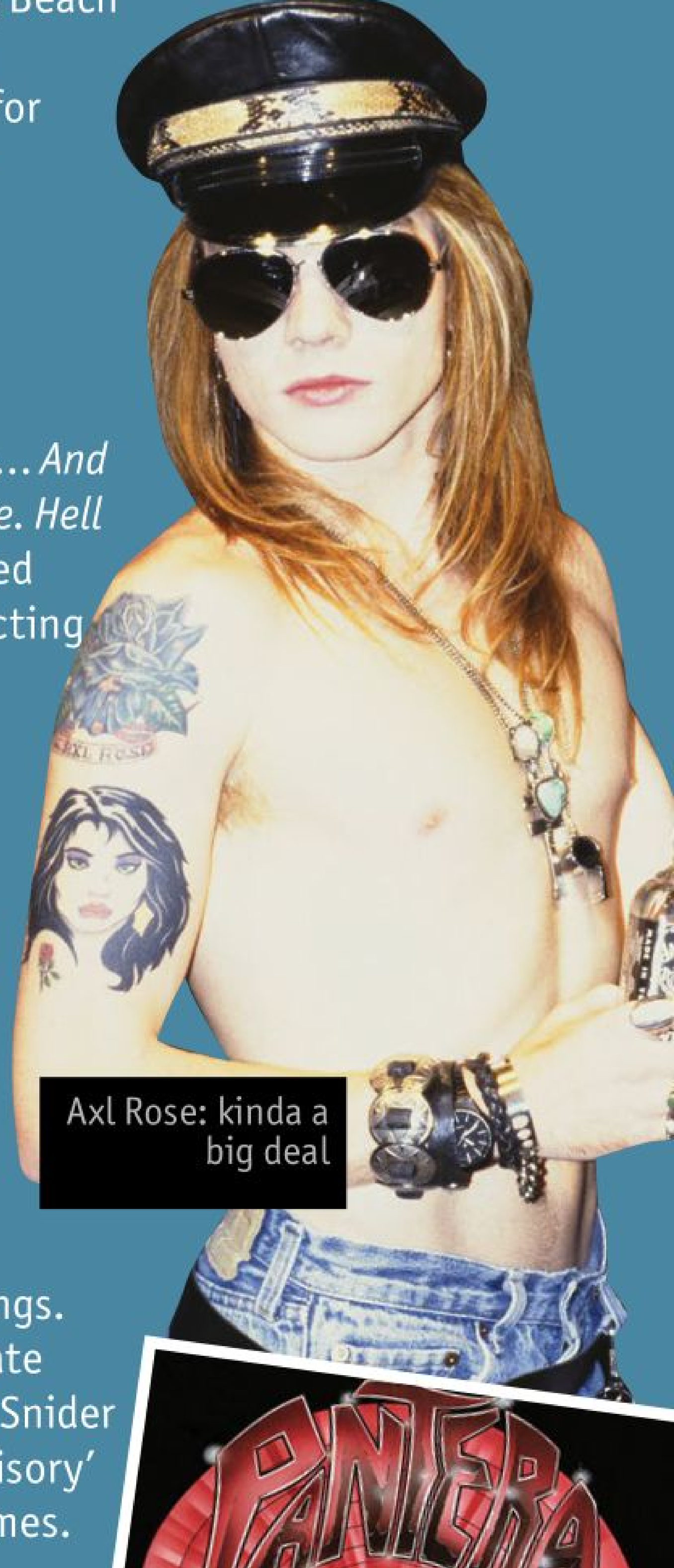
Guns N' Roses formed in the spring of 1985, when Hollywood Rose's Axl Rose and guitarist Izzy Stradlin joined forced with three members of LA Guns. By June, Slash, Duff McKagan and Steven Adler replaced the LA Guns alumni, and a new chapter in rock history began.

LONG BEACH SCREAMS FOR IRON MAIDEN

On July 5, Iron Maiden's epic 11-month tour in support of *Powerslave* drew to a close at Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre. Three months later, *Live After Death*, a brilliant document of the trek, culled from shows at Long Beach Arena and Hammersmith Odeon, was released, and Bruce's iconic "Scream for me, Long Beach!" entreaties became enshrined in metal folklore.

THRASH METAL COMES OF AGE

Bonded By Blood. Killing Is My Business… And Business Is Good. Spreading The Disease. Hell Awaits. Four thrash classics that proved Metallica weren't the only ones perfecting the form.



Axl Rose: kinda a big deal

PMRC TARGET 'OBSCENE' METAL

The PMRC (Parents Music Resource Center) was founded in 1985 to lobby for more parental control over kids' access to music which 'glorified' violence, substance abuse and sexual congress: the group targeted metal and female pop artists on its Filthy Fifteen list of objectionable songs. Their efforts led to a memorable Senate appearance from Twisted Sister's Dee Snider and the introduction of 'Parental Advisory' stickers on albums with 'explicit' themes.

This is pretty much the only fuck that Metallica have ever given
GETTY

"METALLICA THOUGHT, 'IF THE RECORD COMPANY DOESN'T LIKE IT, FUCK THEM!'"

***LIGHTNING/PUPPETS* PRODUCER FLEMMING RASMUSSEN ON METALLICA'S RATHER PUNK ROCK APPROACH TO WRITING**

and if the record company doesn't like it, then fuck them.' I think that was the attitude.

"And it worked, too. There's not one bad song on the album, not a single one. It is just fabulous from start to finish. They had that youthful attitude of 'We're better than everybody else in the whole world' and they were just out to kick some ass."

"I don't remember anything particularly magical about making ...Puppets," Lars later reaffirmed to Hammer. "We had as many fights making Master Of Puppets as any other album. The currency exchange at the time meant that we could spend five months of studio time in Sweet Silence on our budget, but it wasn't so easy for the three American gentlemen in the band to sit in Denmark in the dead of winter for all that time: Cliff got fed up with being in Copenhagen and went back to the States for a while. Then we were getting nowhere mixing the album with Flemming, so we asked Mark Whitaker to come over to help us out. There were no golden rainbows in the studio. Making that album definitely felt like a chore at times."

Typical of his fastidious nature, Lars was the last member of Metallica to exit Sweet Silence. With Cliff having already flown the nest, on December 23 James and Kirk too returned home to San Francisco, leaving their drummer to celebrate the holiday with family in Denmark. On Boxing Day, the day of his 22nd birthday, Lars was back in the studio, working with Flemming on the final overdubs that would complete the recording process of Master Of Puppets.

On December 27, a week shy of three months after entering the facility, the hardcore Danish pornography Metallica had taped to the walls of the studio was removed and the drummer set off for his adopted hometown, content that he had a "motherfucker" of a record in the can.

There was still band business to conclude, however, before the year drew to its close. On December 31, Metallica were booked to play the 7,000-capacity San Francisco Civic Auditorium, atop a bill which featured local heroes Exodus, Seattle's Metal Church and Dave Mustaine's Megadeth: on a hugely important night for Metallica, their first show with their former guitarist's new band was of no little significance.

James can feel it, baybeh!
FRANK WHITE

This was a banner night for the emergent American thrash scene, nothing less than a coronation for its homecoming kings. Perhaps understandably, Dave Mustaine chose to mark the occasion by getting thoroughly trashed, though mouthing off to those in attendance about his new band's potential to wipe the floor with any Bay Area act was a less than smart move, and one which earned the red-headed guitarist a hefty smack in the face from Exodus's tour manager that left him in tears.

If Metallica were aware of the drama unfolding backstage, they gave no indication of giving the slightest sliver of a fuck about their former friend's behaviour as they hit the stage ahead of the New Year chimes.

After a furious No Remorse (a song Dave Mustaine might perhaps have heard with fresh ears), James Hetfield told the San Francisco crowd that the band would like to premiere a new song, one they had earmarked as the title track of their forthcoming third album.

The transcendent eight minutes that followed illustrated that Metallica were once again intent upon breaking new ground, not so much pushing the genre's perceived boundaries as erasing them altogether. With a new year dawning, and Master Of Puppets ready to go, the future of metal lay squarely in their hands. ✠

***INTO THE BLACK*, VOLUME TWO OF PAUL BRANNIGAN'S METALLICA BIOGRAPHY (CO-WRITTEN WITH IAN WINWOOD) IS OUT NOW ON FABER & FABER.**

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METALLICA CLIFF BURTON

Cliff Burton was a one-off, and perhaps no one better summarises what it is to be metal. From his stubborn individuality to his taste in music, he personified our culture in a way that few others have. We pay tribute to the greatest metalhead of our time.

WORDS: MICK WALL & JOEL MCIVER

For Kirk Hammett, time was moving backwards as he remembered the fallen soldier who put the metal into Metallica.

"Cliff had a lot of integrity," Kirk said, quietly. "His way of expressing that integrity was in one stock sentence which I still use to this day, and it was: 'I don't give a fuck.' He really just cared about the music and the integrity behind the music. He was just very, very real."

He certainly was. You only had to look at him to see that. The long, straight hair, parted down the middle. The moth-eaten cardigan and bell-bottom jeans; the weird little bum-fluff 'tache; the tee with some obscure band on it. At a time when poodle-hair, Spandex and make-up were the norm in rock, these were all signifiers of what made Cliff Burton different, signposts to a soul born old that didn't know how to compromise. That truly didn't give a fuck.

Kirk sighed. "I don't know if he knew somehow that his time was limited but he really lived it like it was his last day, because he just wouldn't settle for anything other than what he believed in. And that taught me a lot. To this day there are situations that I'm going through, and I can just picture Cliff saying, 'What's real to you? What really matters?' And he would go through a bunch of points that didn't really matter. He would name them off and at the end of each one he'd say, 'I don't give a fuck!' He was a very, very strong guy. Stubborn at times, and because of that he and I would clash sometimes. But we really were just bros and he was a big influence on all of us."

He remains so to this day. The legend of Cliff Burton is the biggest unifying influence on all subsequent generations of metal. Being true to yourself may have been the founding tenet of the original rock and metal giants, but by the time Metallica came along in the 80s, metal had become codified. The rules had straight-jacketed the music's freewheeling spirit. Cliff made it his mission to break those codes. Every musician who has tried to do the same owes him big time. Cliff was fearless, the guy who stood his ground, holding up his middle finger saying: "What's real to you? I don't give a fuck."

"CLIFF BURTON WAS NOT YOUR BASIC HUMAN BEING. HE MEANT BUSINESS, AND YOU COULDN'T FUCK WITH HIM. I WANTED TO GET THAT RESPECT THAT HE HAD" JAMES HETFIELD ON CLIFF'S UNIQUE PERSONALITY

Clifford Lee Burton was born February 10, 1962. His father Ray, from Tennessee, worked in San Francisco's Bay Area as an assistant highway engineer. Ray's wife Jan was a special needs teacher. Cliff was the youngest brother to Scott David and Connie. When Scott died of a brain aneurysm when Cliff was 13, it had a profound effect on him, reinforcing the idea that life was not to be squandered on trying too hard to make other people happy.

Cliff had played the piano since he was six. Now he told others, "I'm gonna be the best bassist for my brother." Jan was "totally amazed 'cause none of the kids in our family had any musical talent." His early influence was a teacher named Steve Doherty. "He was the one who made Cliff take Beethoven and Bach, made him learn to read music."

Speaking in 1987 with Cliff's old friend Harald Oimoen, Jan described Cliff as "very quiet" and "normal" except for his insistence from a very early age on being "his own person." There was also a stubborn, Aquarian side to Cliff. Playing with kids outside was "boring". Cliff preferred his own company, reading books and playing music. "He was very bright; in the third grade they tested him and he got 11th grade comprehension."

Playing Little League baseball for the Castro Valley Auto House team, he was known as a big hitter. As a teenager, he took a Saturday job at an equipment rental yard called Castro Valley Rentals, where the

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Cliff Burton: "Not your basic human being…"

Lars, Cliff (with Lynyrd Skynyrd t-shirt) and James: Burton brought a wider range of influences to the band.

older workers nicknamed him Cowboy after the cheap straw hat he always wore to work.

Cliff was 14 when he began playing in his first band, EZ-Street. Named after a strip joint in San Mateo, Cliff later played down the experience, dismissing EZ-Street's music as "pretty silly, actually… a lot of covers, just wimpy shit."

EZ-Street afforded him his first chance to play real gigs, performing at the International Cafe in Berkeley. EZ-Street also featured guitarist Jim Martin, a likeminded soul who went on to join Faith No More. As Jim once observed, "Most of what you see on stage at a rock show, whether it's a thrash gig or some heavy hip-hop club, it's all about fantasy. The thing about Cliff was he was real. He wasn't acting out the part to be in a band, he really was that guy. He never saw himself as a star. He was just another one of the guys."

By the time Cliff graduated from high school in 1980, the Burton character was fully formed: an HP Lovecraft-reading, piano-playing homebody who loved beer, Mexican food, pot and acid. A free-thinker who drove a beat-up 1972 VW station wagon nicknamed The Grass-hopper, in which he mixed his Lynyrd Skynyrd tapes with Bach concertos. His favourite pastime was hanging out with his friends Jim Martin and Dave DiDonato, fishing and hunting, or playing Dungeons & Dragons.

"He'd stay up all night and sleep late," said Jan. "But he'd very seldom wake us up. He was exceptionally considerate and loving."

"I WAS JUST INFATUATED WITH HIS UNIQUENESS, HIS LACK OF CONFORMITY, AND HIS SOLE INSISTENCE ON DOING HIS OWN THING, EVEN TO THE POINT OF RIDICULE" LARS ULRICH REMEMBERS HIS FRIEND

"Sometimes you'd think, 'Oh, Cliff, I wish you weren't quite so honest.'" she added. "No little white lies for him, and sometimes that was kind of embarrassing. We were talking about that once, and he said, 'I don't have to lie for anybody. I don't want to lie.' And that's how he felt about it. God, I think he hated lying more than anything."

Enrolling at Chabot College in Hayward, Cliff studied classical music and theory. He hooked up again with Jim Martin, forming an instrumental trio – Agents Of Misfortune – a short-lived outfit in which Cliff first tried incorporating harmonics into his bass playing and improvising with distortion.

Jim Martin would saw away on his guitar with a borrowed violin bow. Entering the Hayward Area Recreation Department's annual Battle Of The Bands contest in 1981, their audition was videoed and can still be found on YouTube. You can hear the bones of two pieces that would later become most associated with his work in Metallica: an early extended bass solo entitled *(Anesthesia) Pulling Teeth* and the strident intro to a number that would become *For Whom The Bell Tolls*.

In 1982, Cliff joined Trauma, well-known to Bay Area scene-makers as a theatrical Iron Maiden-style band. Again, there is a wonderful video clip of them performing on YouTube. Amid billowing dry ice can be seen the incongruous figure of 19-year-old Cliff Burton, unselfconsciously headbanging, his bass full of unnecessary but impressively odd jazz timings and psychedelic overtones.

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Practising four to six hours a day, every day, Cliff's attitude was always: "There's somebody in their garage that hasn't been discovered that's better than you are."

When he decided to quit college to pursue music full-time, his parents were concerned. "We said, 'OK, we'll give you four years," said Jan. "We'll pay for your rent and your food. But after that four years is over, if we don't see some slow progress or moderate progress, if you're just not going anyplace and it's obvious you're not going to make a living out of it, then you're going to have to get a job and do something else.' He said, 'Fine.'"

It was Brian Slagel who recommended Cliff Burton to Lars Ulrich. Brian's label, Metal Blade, had issued the first ever Metallica recording, *Hit The Lights*, on the 1982 *Metal Massacre* compilation. Brian was considering Trauma for on *Metal Massacre II*.

"The band was pretty good," he recalls, "but the bass player was phenomenal." Knowing Metallica were looking for someone to replace original bassist Ron McGovney, when Trauma played LA's Troubadour club a couple of weeks later Brian took Lars and James Hetfield with him. Afterwards, "Lars came up to me and said, 'That is going to be our bass player!'"

Nevertheless, it took months for Lars and James to persuade Cliff even to jam with them. Cliff lived in San Francisco, a cultural quantum leap away from the pulsing neon ooze of LA where Metallica still lived.

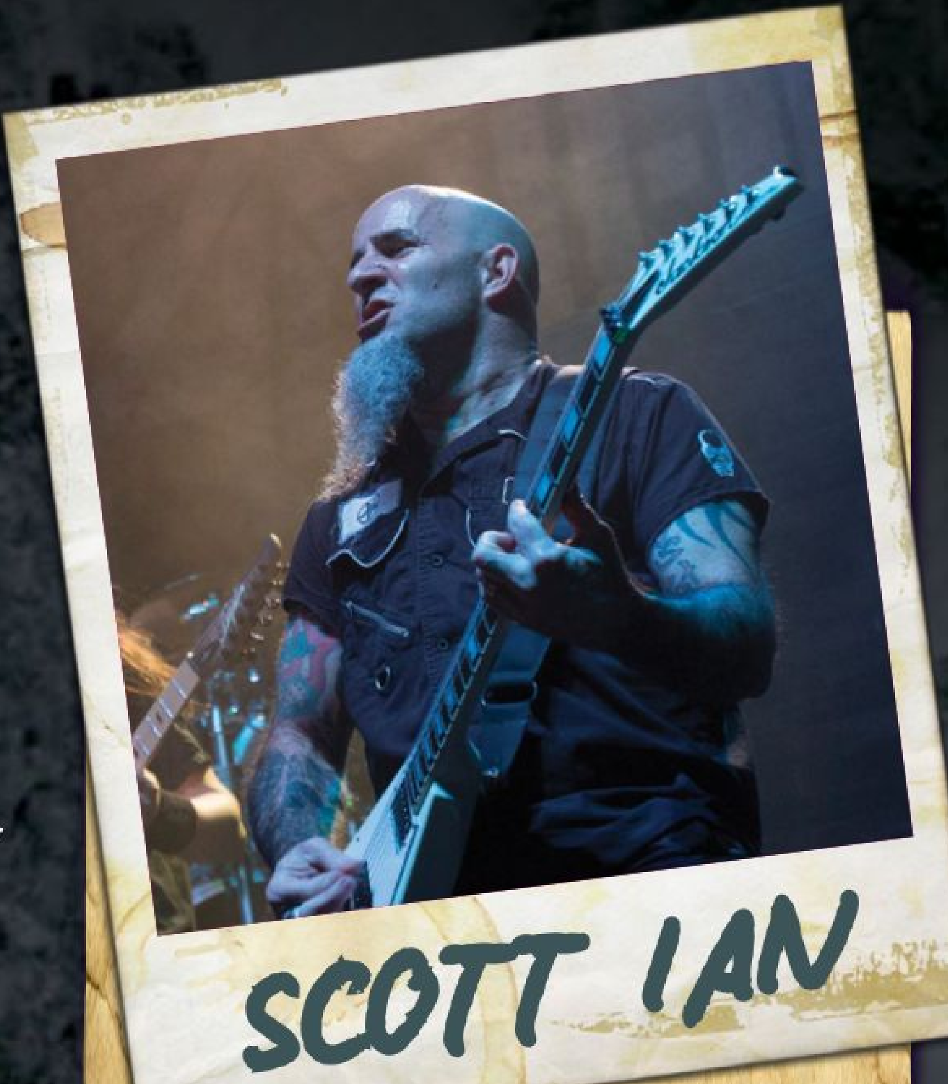
Cliff told them: "I like it up here. So they said, 'Yeah, well, we were thinking about [moving to San Francisco] anyway.' So they came up and we got together in this room, set up the gear and blasted it out for a couple of days. It was obvious straight away that it was a good thing to do, so we did it!"

What they hadn't realised was in Cliff Burton, Metallica hadn't just recruited a gifted bass player, they had acquired a teacher.

As James later said, as well as turning him and Lars onto artists like ZZ Top and Yes, Kate Bush and Peter Gabriel, Cliff was also "the most schooled of any of us; he had gone to junior college to learn some things about music, and taught us quite a few things. He had such a character to himself, and it was a very strong personality, he did creep into all of us eventually."

Lars added: "Cliff was very, very different from James and [me]. He was an interesting mix of the kind of hippy, trippy, non-conformist vibe that was so well-known about San Francisco, kind of in his own headspace. And then also, a whole side that was the redneck element – a beer-drinking, hell-raising, listening to ZZ Top and Lynyrd Skynyrd type of thing. So he was a very interesting mix of many different types of personalities. I was infatuated with his uniqueness. I was infatuated with his lack of conformity, and his insistence on doing his own thing, even to the point of ridicule."

Cliff Burton was simply "not your basic human being," as James laughingly put it. "He was really intellectual but very to the point. He meant business, and you couldn't fuck around with him. I wanted to get that respect that he had. We gave him shit about his bell-bottoms every day. He didn't care. 'This is what I wear. Fuck you.'"



SCOTT IAN

ANTHRAX

CLIFF'S FELLOW THRASH TITAN REMEMBERS A HEAVY METAL BROTHER.

I first met Cliff at the Music Building in Jamaica, Queens in late 1982. We had a rehearsal room there and Metallica were there to record *Kill 'Em All*. They didn't know they were also going to be sleeping in this room which was a squat in a shitty old building. My first impression of Cliff was he looked like he should be in Lynyrd Skynyrd, and I think I asked him where he could even get bell-bottom jeans that wide in 1982. That said, we quickly hit it off. He had a great sense of humour and was absolutely the most original human I had ever met. They were all so different as people but in the context of a band, they were as one. Their souls were on display in every riff. Cliff was the most musical, he spoke with his ideas. He had an aloof, laconic attitude and style, not antisocial at all, just his own vision of things that was uncompromisable.

I remember getting arrested together in London in March, 1984, in a Tube station on suspicion of having drugs. We spent the next six hours in cells while they tested the cold medicine they found in Cliff's jacket. The police took Cliff back to the flat to search it.

I sat in my cell in my underwear thinking we were done for, visions of *Midnight Express* running through my brain because there was weed at the flat. The metal gods were looking out for us that day, the police didn't find it.

It was onstage with Metallica that Cliff's personality really began to assert itself, swinging his 1973 Rickenbacker like an axe, wringing angry distorted tones from it one moment, loud sensuous moans the next. Not everybody in the audience got it straight away, but that didn't matter. Videotaped by a friend at their first ever gig together, Cliff looked into the camera and deadpanned: "We do what we want. We don't care what anyone else thinks."

While Lars and James were besotted with Cliff from the word go, the member of Metallica who grew closest to him was the next to join: Kirk Hammett. In common with Cliff, Kirk studied classical music, performing Haydn and Bach in a high school trio. Like Cliff, he still practised every day, based on lessons given to him by Joe Satriani. On tour in their earliest days, when they were booked into a small motel, James and Lars would share one room, Cliff and Kirk the other. "We were, in the first few years of the band, living in each other's back pockets," Kirk said. "I mean, we were very close."

At night, after a show, Kirk and Cliff would get their acoustic guitars out. "He didn't play bass that much away from stage, so he was always playing guitar. And we would just jam. We had similar interests. He was into horror movies and HP Lovecraft, as I was. He enjoyed doing hallucinogenics, and so did I. He would tell me, 'Hey, man, I just took some acid, whatever you do don't tell the other guys.' I would say, 'Sure, man. Mum's the word.' I didn't take acid in any working environment, but it never bothered him."

LSD, magic mushrooms, weed and pot… in Cliff's hands these were creative tools, not just tickets to ride. Or as Cliff put it, "You don't burn out from going too fast. You burn out from going too slow and getting bored."

Kirk continues: "You also have to understand though, on an emotional level, we all tended to look up to him 'cause he was the guy with the most life experience. He was always the one who exuded the most confidence – the guy who had the best sense of ethics and morals. Whereas we were like slash and burn, seek and destroy, he would take a step back first and think about things and then slash and burn, seek and destroy. This was the guy who would sit around and listen to the Eagles and the Velvet Underground. He turned us onto REM, he turned us onto Creedence [Clearwater Revival]. And he also loved Lynyrd Skynyrd too. Cliff was so far ahead of his time."

A born leader, when the band's first manager, Jonny Z, told them distributors had demanded they change the proposed title of their debut album, *Metal Up Your Ass*, Cliff "got real mad" and yelled at Jonny, "Kill 'em all! Kill 'em all!" Jonny laughs as he recounts the incident. "The next thing you know the album was called *Kill 'Em All*."

With Cliff also in charge of the on-the-road music, the others got lessons in the history of rock. Former tour manager Gem Howard recalls: "Every other band I'd worked with tended to listen to the kind of music they played. But Metallica, they'd be playing the Misfits and smashing the van to bits while driving. Then they'd play Simon & Garfunkel, then Ennio Morricone. Cliff

was always the one that put on the most bizarre stuff."

It was also Cliff that instigated the band's habit of always doing meet-and-greets after each show, no matter how small. According to their friend Bill Hale, "Cliff was the first one who went out and shook hands with the fans, 'cause Cliff was a fan. I would always see him do that the most."

He wasn't a goody two-shoes, though. Cliff also knew how to party. "We would [all] drink day in and day out and hardly come up for air," Kirk recalled. "People would be dropping like flies all around us, but we had the tolerance built up." On their first US tour together in 1983, "We used to start drinking at three or four in the afternoon."

Once Metallica began to achieve a level of fame, there were also groupies. "Lars would charm them, talk his way into their pants," recalled James. "Kirk had a baby face that was appealing to girls. Cliff – he had a big dick. Word got around about that, I guess."

It wasn't until the band's second album, *Ride The Lightning*, in 1984 that Cliff's influence on Metallica really began to assert itself on record. According to producer Flemming Rasmussen, while it was "Lars and James that were more or less in charge" in terms of pure musical vision, "From an artistic point of view it'd probably be Cliff."

This showed not just in the shape of the HP Lovecraft-inspired monster album closer, *The Call of Ktulu*, but in the encouragement they needed to try the acoustic ballad *Fade To Black*. Cliff, who played acoustic guitar and was listening heavily to REM and the Velvet Underground at the time, saw it as a step forward.

As Lars says, with Cliff on board, *Ride The Lightning* was "a giant leap forward in terms of variety and musical ability." Cliff's presence gave them "a much bigger palette." Kirk recalls Cliff there during recording proclaiming, "Bach is God." He thought he was joking. "Then I realised he wasn't."

Cliff remembered how he had become "consumed" by Bach when he first heard his music. "Taking lessons, getting into theory or whatever, it leaves quite an influence. A lot of music will go in one ear and out the other, but you listen to that shit for a month and it stamps you. It leaves its mark."

It was also Cliff who came up with the idea behind one of Metallica's most enduring classics. They were watching the epic Cecil B DeMille movie *The Ten Commandments* on TV one night (based on the Bible story of the Angel of Death sent by God in ancient Egyptian times to kill every firstborn child) when Cliff, in a cloud of weed, exclaimed, "Whoa, it's like creeping death!" They laughed so much they decided to write a song about it.

Even the bands who opened for Metallica on tour took notice of their bassist. Joey Vera, bassist with Armored Saint, was especially drawn to Cliff. "We had a kinship, Cliff and I, because we also listened to some jazz fusion. He also had this really strong punk aesthetic… of going against the norm, someone who is basically an artist. That's how I always perceived Cliff, as someone who was very strongly opinionated and very much not willing to do anything which would go against what he believed in. It was pretty evident back then that it mattered to the rest of the guys too."

"THIS WAS THE GUY WHO WOULD SIT AROUND AND LISTEN TO THE EAGLES AND THE VELVET UNDERGROUND. CLIFF WAS SO FAR AHEAD OF HIS TIME" KIRK HAMMETT RECALLS CLIFF'S TASTE IN MUSIC

Joey says Cliff "almost had his own language. Just the way he would phrase things. Once we played a show in El Paso, and we're all waiting to go onstage. He opens our dressing room door and pops his head in and says: 'Weakness is emanating from the crowd.' And he shuts the door." He chuckles. "We took that as, OK, now we've got to go out and really fucking wake these people up. The Grand Master has come in and let us know where he stands…"

When Metallica made their first Castle Donington festival appearance in 1985, just like every band low on the bill, they were greeted by a hail of beer cans and plastic bottles of piss. Cliff, though, was unfazed. Dodging a flying pear which ended up in his bass bin, he coolly sauntered over, picked it up, took a couple of bites then slung it back into the crowd, who cheered. "Donington was a day of targets and projectiles," he told Harald. "I think they liked us, though."

At the Day On The Green festival in San Francisco two weeks later, James ran amok in a Jägermeister fit and trashed the dressing room. Cliff cooled him out with one look. "Cliff was the most mature out of all of us," said Kirk. "When I'd do something stupid, or Lars or James would do something stupid, he was the guy who would say, 'What the hell were you thinking?' He was always the guy to reprimand us."

When Bobby Schneider became their tour manager in 1985, he says it was clear that "Cliff was the backbone. Cliff was the guy that everybody looked to. If there was something Cliff wasn't gonna like, it wasn't gonna happen. No one fucked with Cliff."

But no one, not even Cliff Burton, can cheat death. Cliff knew that. What he couldn't have known was how cruelly death would play the game, snatching him away from us just as it seemed things were reaching their zenith in his life, both musically and personally.

The third Metallica album, *Master Of Puppets*, released in March 1986 just six months before Cliff died, wasn't just a new peak for the band; it was a game-changer in the history of rock and metal.

It was the springboard for the astonishing success Metallica would later enjoy, and it seemed like it would be the start of the most remarkable lineage of albums since Led Zeppelin in their heyday. Instead, it became the full stop that nearly finished off the band – the beginning and end of an era all in one.

Although Cliff only received co-writing credits on three of its eight tracks, Kirk feels that "people don't talk enough about Cliff's contribution to that album. I remember him playing the intro to *Damage, Inc* on the *Ride The Lightning* tour. It has all those bass swells and harmonies on it. I remember him saying, 'Yeah, it's based on a Bach piece.' I asked him which one and I'm not sure if I've got the title right but I'm pretty sure he said it was *Come Sweetly Death* or something like that."

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The piece is *Come, Sweet Death*, from the *69 Sacred Songs And Arias* that Johann Sebastian Bach contributed to Georg Christian Schemelli's *Musical Songbook*, nearly 1,000 song-texts written as musical notation indicating intervals, chords and non-chord tones in relation to a bass note, providing harmonic structure. Very Cliff-like.

Outside the studio, when Cliff and Kirk weren't getting wasted in their hotel room, "we'd go out and play poker for eight hours straight after being up for 24 hours. We'd find a seafood restaurant that was open, eat raw oysters and drink beer, scream at the natives while we were drunk." They were, he said, "some of my best memories" from that time.

It seemed nothing could stop them. By summer 1986, *Master Of Puppets* had sold over 500,000 copies, giving the band their first gold record and taking Metallica into the US Top 30 for the first time. A quarter of a century later, it has now sold almost seven million copies in America, and almost as many more around the world. Kirk recalled a meeting on the back of the tour bus when they were told they now had enough money to put down payments on their own houses. "The first thing that Cliff said was, 'I wanna house where I can shoot my gun that shoots knives!' That was like a typical Cliff Burton thing to say…"

For Cliff, success was not an end in itself. This was just the beginning. Backstage at the Birmingham Odeon, a young music journalist named Garry Sharpe-Young asked Cliff what the band would do if one of them died.

"What we were actually discussing was the hypothesis of Lars meeting his maker," Sharpe-Young recalled. "Cliff said they would have a big drunken party in his honour, and then get in a new drummer. Fast…"

After a final climactic show in London, the band set off for dates in Europe. At the third show, at the Solnahallen in Stockholm, James – who until then had been unable to play guitar since a skateboarding accident three months before – played superbly, the band back to their classic four-man shape.

Flying high again, Metallica outdid themselves, Cliff hitting new heights as he added a bizarre yet affecting version of *The Star Spangled Banner* to his usual bass solo , headbanging around the stage, his right arm windmilling. He'd lately been complaining again of back pain. Not that night, though.

Afterwards, they climbed aboard the tour bus for the drive to the next day's show in Copenhagen. It would be a long journey and the bus was cramped. Kirk and Cliff cut cards to see who got a more comfortable window-side bunk, Cliff winning when he drew the ace of spades. He and James stayed awake a little longer, James drinking vodka, Cliff smoking a spliff. Their bunks were at the back, next to each other. They both nodded off, the whole bus silent, when it began to leave the road…

As we now know, Cliff Burton died in the crash, his body thrown through the bunkside window and crushed by the weight of the bus falling on him. Back at the hotel that first night without Cliff, they got drunk. No matter how much they drank, none could find sleep. James fell to pieces, grief-stricken one moment, full of rage the next. At four in the morning, the others could hear James drunk in the street outside, screaming: "Cliff! Where are you?!" Kirk couldn't bear it and burst into tears.

News travelled fast. Gary Holt of Exodus was

STEVE DOHERTY

CLIFF'S BASS TEACHER REMEMBERS THE KID HE TAUGHT BACK IN '77…

Cliff studied with me on Wednesday afternoons at ABC Music, a little music store in Castro Valley. He had a lot of discipline. Cliff made the effort to learn to read standard notation – just one of the reasons why he was above average as a bass student. We studied baroque things like Bach. We'd talk about chords and playing melodies, and how the chord progressions fit together. We also got into the different time signatures – which I haven't gone into with many students, but Cliff really enjoyed them. I was pleased to see how he took stuff we worked on and made it into something exciting. The first time I heard *Orion* I thought, 'that's what we worked on!' He was a joy to teach and he made rapid progress."

Cliff's Law: "Devote yourself to what you love and don't get sidetracked by all the bullshit life has to offer."

Four men that changed the world.

"moving a 25-gallon fish tank" out of his parents' house when he heard. "Usually when you hear about a musician dying it's at his own hand, you know, drug overdose, chokes on his vomit, shit that would have been old hat. But dying in a bus crash? That was the first I'd heard of that."

Joey Vera was also at home when he got the phone call. "I was just completely stunned and devastated, shocked… You get that sense of 'this can't be right, I just saw Cliff six or eight weeks ago.'"

Jim Martin heard from Cliff's mother Jan. "My heart sank." Cliff, he said, "was part of the think-tank." Jim was due back on the road the next day but "travelled home in between tour dates to attend his funeral. It was a rough time, especially for his folks."

Dave Mustaine turned to drugs. "I went straight to the dope man, got some shit and started singing and crying and writing this song," he remembered The song was *In My Darkest Hour,* the centrepiece of the next Megadeth album, *So Far, So Good… So What!*.

There was a memorial service back in San Francisco during the first week of October, at which *Orion* was played. Cliff's funeral was held on Tuesday, October 7, at Chapel of the Valley in Castro Valley, where he had lived with his folks most of his life.

As well as Cliff's immediate family, his girlfriend Corinne and best pals Jim Martin and David DiDonato were there, along with the rest of Metallica, plus Bobby Schneider and their co-manager Peter Mensch. Other mourners included all of Exodus, Trauma, and Faith No More drummer Mike Bordin.

Cliff's ashes were then taken and spread at the Maxwell Ranch. As David later recalled, "We stood in a large circle with Cliff's ashes in the centre. Each of us walked into the centre and took a handful of him and said what we had to say… Then he was cast onto the earth, in a place he loved very much."

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"WHEN I HEARD, I WENT STRAIGHT TO THE DOPE MAN" DAVE MUSTAINE ON CLIFF'S DEATH

Gary Holt remembered: "It was a sombre affair, to say the least. But then you gather up at someone's house after and you get drunk and share a laugh, you know?"

A commemorative headstone was laid, engraved: IN LOVING MEMORY OF, and below that a picture of Cliff taken not long before he died.

The aftershocks of Cliff Burton's death will continue to reverberate around Lars Ulrich, James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett for the rest of their lives. Kirk said: "When I first joined the band there was a huge infusion of new energy, and up until Cliff died we were just so psyched about everything and life in general. But that kind of ended when Cliff left." He paused then added, "I still think about him every day… Something he said, something he did, just… something."

A few months before he died, Cliff was asked what advice he had for aspiring young musicians. He replied: "When I first started, I decided that I would devote my life to it." Devotion, he said, was the key. "To absolutely devote yourself to that, to virtually marry yourself to what you're going to do and not get sidetracked by all the other bullshit that life has to offer."

Metallica's search for a new bassist began almost immediately – Jason Newsted was appointed within weeks of Cliff's funeral. No real replacement for Cliff Burton has ever been found, though. His spirit lives on in Metallica. James Hetfield says that whenever Metallica are involved in new, exciting projects, "there's always thoughts, when we're doing things, in the back of our minds: 'Wow! Cliff would just love this', you know?"

Cliff Burton – the uncompromising soul and conscience of Metallica, in life and, still, in death. We salute you. There was never a metalhead like you before. There will never be a metalhead like you again.

GONE FOR A BURTON

Streetfighting men: James Hetfield, Kirk Hammett, Lars Ulrich and Cliff Burton, on the early part of the road to becoming the biggest metal band on the planet.

Could the last photograph used on the last page of Metallica's Damage Inc. tour brochure in 1986 have hidden a final farewell from their bassist Cliff Burton? Puppeteer: Geoff Barton

AS JOHN LYDON SNARLED ON PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.'S debut single in October 1978: *'Two sides to every story'*. In other words, you're either on one side of the fence or the other; you're a believer, or you're a sceptic; you're for, or you're against.

It would be very easy to conclude that the following tale is nothing more than a series of half-assed coincidences, a collection of convenient quirks of fate. After all, a band like Metallica has a bulging repertoire of songs about decay and destruction; it can't be that difficult to concoct a cock-and-bull story such as this one, not when you've got a bunch of ready-made connections at your disposal. The conspiracy theorists among you, however, might think otherwise.

Me? I won't be making any crazy assumptions; I'm no Erich von Daniken. I'm just going to tell you – as straightforwardly as I possibly can – about some eerie events that took place in 1986, eight years after that Public Image Ltd. single reached the UK Top 10. But before the weirdness kicks in, let's begin on a light-hearted note…

Lars Ulrich of Metallica has just arrived outside my house in a rusty brown Fiat Panda. Through the car's side window I can see Denmark's foremost drummer narrow his eyes and gaze somewhat critically at the Barton abode: a modest, three-bedroom detached dwelling way out to the west of London, on the environs of Heathrow Airport; a typically English suburban residence – if you can disregard the incessant rumble of jet engines and the occasional jumbo rattling the roof tiles. But it's my home.

Ulrich, dressed anonymously in plain black T-shirt, pale blue, tight-thighed jeans and signature white trainers, disembarks from the Panda. The car door doesn't so much 'clunk' as 'ding' shut, recalling the sound made by a WWF wrestler when he brains his opponent with a flimsy metal tea tray. As the door settles on its hinges, the cheap Italian four-wheeled tin box quivers on its suspension springs in protest. I half expect the headlamps to explode and the bonnet to fly open in the manner of a clown's car puttering around the arena at Chipperfield's circus.

This is not exactly the coolest entrance in the world (leave that for stretch limos and Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame ceremonies, but Ulrich remains unabashed.

"Hey, Geoff," he drawls as he walks up my rutted garden path – a poor replacement indeed for the traditional red carpet. "I thought you would've lived in a mansion."

"On a British rock journalist's pay?" I retort as we shake hands enthusiastically. "You must be joking, Lars. Come on inside."

We adjourn to the kitchen and rustle up some mugs of sweet tea. Photographer Ross Halfin – the proud owner and driver of the Panda, believe it or not – is with us, along with a host of supermarket carrier bags full of zillions of colour transparencies. And, happily, they're not Halfin's holiday snaps, they're his latest pictures of Metallica.

We've gathered together to discuss the content of and choose the photographs for the band's 'Damage, Inc.' tour programme, which I am apparently designing. Halfin has somehow convinced Ulrich that I am a first-rate graphic artist – even though my layout skills don't really extend much beyond cutting-and-pasting a list of tour dates onto a page of *Kerrang!*.

But before we get down to the nitty-gritty, Ulrich is being assaulted by a small child scuttling around in a bright red baby-walker.

"Hey, little guy, be careful there," Ulrich says kindheartedly, as said baby-walker collides with his left ankle. My infant son Ben grins back angelically. And then rams Ulrich with his baby-walker again.

(This potentially life-changing encounter with an all-time drumming legend sadly left little musical impression on Ben, who is now in his late teens. As I write, he is probably twirling his twin decks at some seedy garage club somewhere as he performs under his nom de plume, DJ Double-B. Ah well. You can kill 'em all, but you can't win 'em all.)

We go up to the side bedroom now, which I've tried to tart up as best I can as a professional tour programme designer's studio. And I think I might just get away with it – just as long as Mr Ulrich doesn't notice the cringingly embarrassing floral wallpaper, the off-white shag-pile carpet, the dying rubber plant, the broken 1960s lava lamp, the musty smell of damp in one corner, the…

'Blood will follow blood/Dying time is here/Damage incorporated' – the chorus of 'Damage, Inc.', from Metallica's 'Master Of Puppets' album.

Now this is where the weirdness kicks in. After hours of typically intense Ulrich-style discussion, the mountains of Metalli-pix have been eroded away into mounds of more manageable molehills. A tour programme strategy has been formed, a page plan drawn up and a deadline determined. With a final, explicit warning from Ulrich: "This absolutely must be the final photograph on the final page, Geoff. No question. He'll be so pissed, so annoyed. Make sure it happens."

While the drummer joins Halfin to head back east to Raynes Park in the rattling Panda, the real work begins.

I'll just take a moment here to explain how the design process worked in these pre-desktop publishing, dinosaur days. All you really needed were basic tools such as a bunch of brightly coloured pens and plenty of large-sized, A2 paper, plus a slide projector (I'd hired an archaic one from a local camera shop on this particular occasion). You simply drew up the outline of your page on a sheet of paper and pinned it on to a suitably flat wall. You then filled the projector's carousel with transparencies, darkened the room and shone a succession of images on to the paper, locating them inside the pre-drawn page border. The images could be resized by using the projector's zoom lens to zoom in and out, or they could be repositioned by moving the projector from side to side or tilting it up and down.

The next step would be to kneel down in front of the piece of paper mounted on the wall – backbreaking work, this – and trace around the images projected onto it. Repeat ad infinitum to build up the picture placement process, then finalise the sketched page design and add written instructions to the printer as appropriate.

It's simple enough, but extremely labour intensive.

Anyhow, I'm rattling along at a fairly good pace, until I get to the tour programme page devoted to bass player Cliff Burton, when the damn projector starts playing up.

The carousel jams, and maybe half a dozen transparencies get stuck too close to the projector's scorching light-bulb. There's an awful smell akin to someone's hair being set on fire, and a sizzling sound like super-heated streaky bacon. Globules of melted plastic drip on to the floor.

Cliff Burton begins to burn…

ROSS HALFIN

"LARS ULRICH HAS JUST ARRIVED OUTSIDE MY HOUSE IN A RUSTY BROWN FIAT PANDA."

METALLICA'S 'DAMAGE, INC.' TOUR WAS A monster in more ways than one. It kicked off on March 27, 1986, at the Coliseum in Wichita, Kansas. April dates began on the first at the Kemper Arena in Kansas City, Missouri, and ended at the Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, New York, on April 29.

The band continued their epic Stateside trek from May right through to the beginning of August, cramming in a short visit to Europe on July 5 and 6 to play, respectively, Saapasjalka in Wvaskyla, Finland, and the famed Roskilde Festival in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The European leg of the tour began in earnest on September 10 in Wales, at Cardiff St. David's Hall. Then, 17 days and 12 gigs later, the gruelling schedule came to a shuddering – better make that skidding – halt.

It's just before dawn on Saturday, September 27, on a godforsaken highway winding up the frozen mountains between the Swedish capital of Stockholm and Copenhagen.

Metallica's tour bus is travelling along at a fair pace, its six wheels kicking up a shroud of snow through which shimmers a gloomy half-light. Suddenly the bus hits some treacherous black ice and begins to slither out of control on the wrong side of the road. It slides and slews for 50 feet or so before falling sideways into a ditch near the tiny town of Ljungby.

Cliff Burton, aged just 24, is sleeping on a bunk at the back of the bus. When the tour bus begins to topple he's thrown out of a window. There's nothing anyone can do to prevent the rolling bus from landing on top him, crushing him to death.

Burton was, in many ways, Metallica's talisman. A firm fan favourite; a lucky charm in loon pants. But whatever magic powers he possessed were abruptly curtailed on that chilling night in autumn '86, when winter arrived early for Metallica.

For bassist Cliff Burton, heavy metal was too serious a business to smile about.

This isn't the place for a misty-eyed eulogy. That's not the point of this particular exercise. But it's worth remembering that although Burton was popularly known as 'the most headbanging bassist', he was much, much more than a goofy West-Coast longhair with a crowd-pleasing, windmill playing technique.

Burton provided the ideal counterpoint to Ulrich's vigorous, pneumatic drum beats and the low-end, twin-engined growling of guitarists James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett.

Like Andy Fraser of Free fame, Burton was in a class above your archetypal solid, dependable four-string plucker. As well as possessing the ability to pummel out a booming, unremitting, heart-hammering beat, Burton – unusual in this genre of metaldom – had an instinctive sense of where to add clever nuances, creative runs and chunky fills. To him, the bass guitar wasn't just part of a rhythm section, it was a lead instrument.

'BURTON DIDN'T WANT METALLICA'S FANS TO SEE HIM IN SUCH A COMPROMISING POSE.'

Burton joined Metallica in late 1982 from Trauma, replacing the lightweight Ron McGovney. Some might say the addition of Burton was the single most important factor that helped extricate Metallica from California's seething thrash metal swampland. I wouldn't necessarily disagree with that.

Just before Jason Newsted was expressed in from Flotsam & Jetsam as Metallica's new bass player, I remember my kolleague (sorry, old habits die hard) Xavier Russell writing a heartfelt tribute to the Bell-Bottomed One in *Kerrang!* magazine.

But, Xavier being Xavier, he couldn't resist a hint of irreverence. At the end of his accolade, he made a close-to-the-bone reference to a track on Metallica's 'Ride The Lightning' album: wasn't it strange, Xavier remarked, that in the light of the events surrounding Burton's death Metallica had once recorded a song called 'Trapped Under Ice'?

At the time, Xavier was fiercely criticised for his gallows humour. Many believed he had overstepped the mark. But, looking back, it could have been another strand in this strange tale.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1986. OFF THE TRAIN AND OUT OF THE lift at Mornington Crescent Underground station, across traffic-choked Hampstead Road and up the stairs into Greater London House – the old Black Cat cigarettes building. Turn right at the lobby area and push through thick wooden double doors into the reception of Spotlight Publications, publishers of *Kerrang!* magazine.

I'm late for work, I'm sweaty and I'm flustered – and I'm wondering how we're going to deal with the news of the awful events that have taken place in Scandinavia over the weekend.

Meanwhile, the person sitting behind the front desk is looking at me with wide-eyed astonishment. The look on his face is a mix of abject horror and blessed relief.

Now, Michal, the Polish security guy, has a decent enough grasp of the English language, but occasionally he gets confused and he doesn't hear straight.

This Monday morning, I step back in surprise as Michal gets up from his chair, his face now breaking out into a great big, beaming smile. He hurries over and gives me a crushing bear hug.

"I have been thinking that you were dead!" Michal exclaims. "The readers have all been telephoning up, and I have been thinking that you were dead!"

Like I say, sometimes Michal's ears play tricks. But in this case it's an aural illusion of David Blaine-like proportions.

What happened was that while he was manning Spotlight's reception on Saturday and Sunday, Michal had had to field dozens of phone calls from distressed *Kerrang!* readers.

All weekend, he says breathlessly, distraught metal fans were trying to get through to an empty *Kerrang!* office with the news that some bus had skidded on ice on a road somewhere and someone had died.

But Michal isn't a Metallica fan, and he's never heard of Cliff Burton; to him, it sounded like the callers were saying: 'Geoff Barton'.

I should have known what would be waiting for me in the *Kerrang!* office when I finally escape Michal's clutches. A bundle of 'Damage, Inc.' tour programmes sitting on my desk. And a few final twists in the tale.

The programme has turned out pretty well for an amateur designer, I reflect as I flick through its pages. And I raise a wry smile when I come across a quote from Dave Roberts of *Faces* magazine, which Lars Ulrich had demanded be used in big type on a prominent right-hand page early in the book: "Metallica are dirty, obnoxious, noisy, ugly and I hate them… but you can't deny their success."

Then I remember the other thing Ulrich had insisted upon: "This absolutely must be the final photograph on the final page."

I flip the programme over, momentarily wincing as I see how my name has been credited: 'Programme layout and design by Geoff 'Creeping Geoff' Barton' (obviously a reference to 'Creeping Death', another track from 'Ride The Lightning' – and also not the most appropriate play on words, given the weekend's events).

Whatever. I cast my eyes down the page and there, in the bottom right-hand corner, is the photograph Ulrich ("He'll be so pissed, so annoyed") was so keen to be included. The photo shows the four Metallica members perched on a riser in front of a drum kit. Ulrich is wearing a white, sleeveless shirt emblazoned with a drawing of an Absolut vodka bottle. He is grinning happily. By his side, James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett both appear to be in a similarly ebullient mood.

Cliff Burton is on the far left of the photograph. He's got a black strip across his eyes (inserted by the printer) which is supposed to disguise his identity. Even so, it's plainly obvious that it's Burton – after all, who else would be sitting there?

What's more, the blindfold doesn't hide the fact that his face is wearing a very unfamiliar expression. I remember Ulrich saying that Burton was so appalled by his uncool behaviour when this photograph was taken, that as soon as he saw it he ripped it to pieces and threw it away – he didn't want Metallica's fans to see him in such a compromising pose. But the offending and ripped photograph was rescued from the wastebasket and reassembled for use, without Burton's knowledge, in the tour programme.

The repair job has been a good one. But studying the photograph at close quarters, I can see quite clearly how the cracks – the tear lines – in the reconstituted image converge to centre on Burton's broken skull. And between the twin cascades of long, brown hair, I can definitely make out a jutting, defiant chin, some sunken cheekbones and – this is what Burton didn't want anyone to see – a pair of puckered-up, hippy lips.

A lump the size of a cricket ball gets lodged in my throat. Through his shattered visage, Burton appears to be pursing his mouth to blow… a last kiss goodbye. ■

Say hello, wave goodbye. The last photo used in Metallica's 1986 tour brochure.

ROSS HALFI

ROSS HALFI

DAMAGE INC

By 1986, thrash metal had outgrown its violent playground in the dives of San Francisco, and **Metallica**, **Megadeth**, **Slayer** and **Anthrax** were about to release albums that would change the face of music. This is the story of the year that thrash broke, by the people who were there.

Words: **Jon Hotten**

It was 1985, almost 1986. The biggest record in the world was Bruce Spingsteen's chest-beating *Born In The USA*. The upper reaches of the American charts were populated by bands who had appeared at Live Aid that summer. MTV was four years old, and still 15 months away from the launch of its first specialist show, Headbanger's Ball… The rock bands that could get airplay included Ratt, Ozzy Osbourne, Def Leppard and Judas Priest. The biggest band in Los Angeles was Mötley Crüe, who were at the head of a new glam rock movement that soon had old arena lags like Ozzy and The Scorpions frosting their hair and wearing eyeliner.

But below the radar, something was stirring. The unruly offspring of heavy metal and punk rock, thrash metal had coalesced three years earlier around a handful of disenfranchised musicians in San Francisco's Bay Area, with smaller pockets of activity in New York and Los Angeles. The key bands – San Francisco's Metallica, LA's Slayer and Megadeth and New York's Anthrax – had all released records that had been greeted rapturously by those in the know.

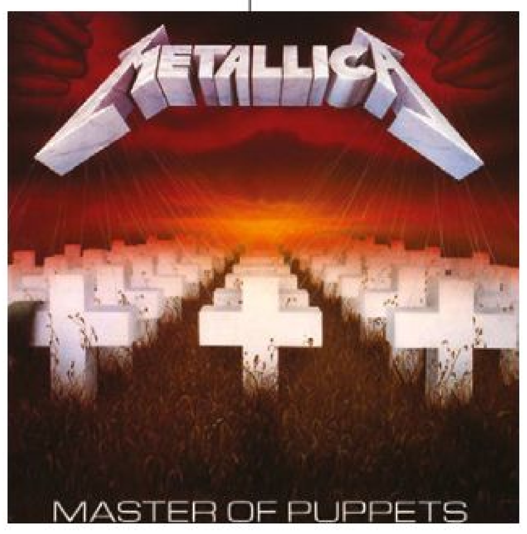
The scene was based around a handful of independent labels: Metal Blade and Megaforce in California, Music For Nations in the UK. For three years, they'd sustained themselves without any overlap with the mainstream music industry.

But all that was starting to change. Metallica – the undisputed heavyweight champions of the scene – had signed with major label Elektra in 1985, and their peers were eyeing their progression with a mixture of admiration and envy. By the end of the year, the floodgates had opened, and thrash had planted its size 11 baseball boots squarely in the mainstream.

Brian Slagel (Metal Blade Records founder): The thrash scene was super-small. Certainly in the US, all the bands knew each other. I think back then, everyone was just so in love with the music. It was an us-against-the-world mentality.

Lars Ulrich (Metallica): You could send five demo tapes to people, and a week later, a hundred kids had copies. It could spread like brush fire.

Brian Slagel: I guess it's easy now to think that the big bands of the time were the Big Four, but I think back then, if you were going to name a band that would come from inside that scene who would eventually make it huge, we all would have said Armoured Saint. But it just ended up not ever happening the way we thought it would.



Lars Ulrich: You could certainly argue that me and James at that time were more kind of the squarer guys, 'cause we were more like, 'MOTÖRHEAD! IRON MAIDEN!' Heavy metal T-shirts, and long hair and banging our heads into the wall.

Harald Oimoen (photographer): Dave Mustaine, of course, was extremely bitter about his dismissal from Metallica and drowned himself in alcohol and drugs. I was more than happy to indulge him. Lars and Mustaine still hung out regularly, unbeknownst to the media, where Dave spoke his mind, slagging Metallica at every possible chance.

Eric Peterson (Testament guitarist): Paul Baloff (late Exodus singer) was the idol of the Bay Area, because of his personality. He had a real wolf. He'd walk into the clubs with his wolf, taking it everywhere. It had paws like a bear. He had a couple of commands that would make it snarl at you.

Gary Holt (Exodus guitarist): The wolf's name was By-Tor. Paul had this Jim Jones quality over a crowd. If he said drink the purple Kool-Aid, they drank it. He had that sort of twisted leadership.

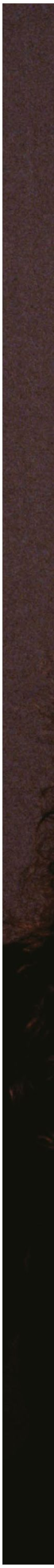
Brian Slagel: Slayer was an interesting group because they weren't particularly good friends. When they would get together it was just magical, but they didn't really hang out a whole lot.

Tom Araya (Slayer vocalist/bassist): The scene was bigger in Europe. We played the Heavy Sounds festival in Belgium [in late '85] to 15,000 people. We'd been playing to 300-400 people in clubs in the US.

Gem Howard (Music For Nations): Metallica broke Europe before they broke America, and when (managers) Q-Prime took over, they took a hit European act and broke them in America.

On 27 December 1985, in a snow-bound Copenhagen, Metallica are putting the final touches to their third album, *Master Of Puppets*. They've been in Denmark for four months, splitting their time between Sweet Silence Studios, where they recorded previous album *Ride The Lightning*, and their shared suites in the Scandinavia Hotel. The master tapes will be shipped to Los Angeles, to be mixed by Michael Wagener, whose credits include Mötley Crüe and Poison. They don't know it, but the next 12 months will change everything for them and for the movement they'd come to spearhead.

James Hetfield (Metallica singer/guitarist): The songs themselves remind me of an innocent Metallica. Not stupid, but in a not tarnished, not ruined-by-fame way. The honesty and innocence of living at the studio; still having that fire. And only Metallica on our minds. I think *Master Of Puppets* was all we ever thought about.



The four horsemen: Metallica in 1986.

"There's an innocence about *Master Of Puppets*. A real 'Fuck you, world!' attitude to it."
James Hetfield

GETTY

"I WAS AN HOUR AWAY FROM DEATH."

How Slayer's Jeff Hanneman survived flesh-eating disease.

Jeff Hanneman was kicking back in the hot tub with a couple of beers when he nearly died. The Slayer guitarist certainly wasn't partying hard, but he was relaxed enough not to notice a spider bite him on the arm.

"Didn't even feel it," he says now. "But an hour later, I knew that I was ill."

By that time, Hanneman was on his way to hospital, a further hour away. In the car, he pulled up his sleeve. "I could see the flesh corrupting," he recalls. "The arm was real hot. I got to the emergency room, and thank God the nurse knew straight away what it was. By chance, although it is pretty rare, she had seen a case a little while before. At that point, I was an hour away from death."

The spider bite was not serious in itself, but it had caused a bacterial infection in the deeper layers of the skin and tissues of the arm. The clinical diagnosis was Necrotizing Fasciitis, which is more widely known as Flesh-Eating Disease.

"Unbelievably, the doctor was a Slayer fan," says Hanneman, "The first thing he said to me was: 'First, I'm going to save your life. Then I'm going to save your arm. Then I'm going to save your career'."

Hanneman underwent emergency surgery to remove the dead and dying tissue. The doctor was able to save the muscles and the tendons, but the guitarist had a large open wound on his arm. He spent the next two months in hospital, having extensive skin grafts and heavy doses of antibiotics to suppress the infection.

"I had to learn to walk again," Hanneman says. "I hadn't stood up for a month, apart from anything else. The skin grafts were very painful, and all of the muscles and tendons in the arm were very weak. That was okay though. I count myself very lucky that the nurse and the doctor knew right away what had happened to me, because things could have been a whole lot worse."

While Slayer, fulfilled their touring commitments with stand-in guitarist Gary Holt, Hanneman spent most of 2011 rehabilitating. With the worst of it behind him, Hanneman can see the humour in the situation too.

"It's the kind of thing I might have written a song about," he acknowledges. "Everything that could go wrong this year did, but you know, it turned out okay. Satan had my back."

WORDS: JON HOTTEN

Open up and say "Aaaarrggghhh!"

LONDON FEATURES INTERNATIONAL

Kirk Hammett (Metallica guitarist): I could tell it was really blossoming into something to be reckoned with. Every song we came up with was like the greatest thing. Every time we'd write another it was like, 'Oh my God,' you know.

Lars Ulrich: We braced ourselves for fucking uproar in the thrash community about the sell-outs and the acoustic guitars and all that. But we had to go on that path because that was the truth; that was our truth.

Gem Howard: We had all four of what was to become the Big Four at the same time at Music For Nations. We licensed Slayer for the UK. We had the first two Anthrax albums, the first three Metallica, and we had the first Megadeth album. Metallica were the strongest of those without a doubt.

James Hetfield: There's an innocence about it and a real, 'Fuck you, world' attitude to it still. And we weren't very influenced by all of the 'bigness' of Metallica. Plus the songs – they have that energy, that fire; they're still youthful, but we were still growing, and the songs got grander and bigger.

On 31 January, 1986. The Spastik Children – Metallica's Cliff Burton and James Hetfield (on drums) plus vocalist Fred Cotton and guitarist James McDaniel – play a show at San Francisco dive Ruthie's Inn, a hub of the Bay Area scene.

Eric Peterson (Testament guitarist): Ruthie's was in a very dangerous part of San Pablo Avenue, all broken-down looking shops. The dressing room was this little closet behind the stage. Basically you hung out in the crowd, or you got there right when you went on and you walked through the crowd. It was a very dirty, dingy-looking club owned by these blues kind of people, Big Daddy and Earl. They made the best Kamikazes. That was the drink there.

> "No one had guns. It was all switchblades. Everybody had a switchblade."
> Eric Peterson

Charlie Benante (Anthrax drummer): *Master Of Puppets* moved everything up a notch, that's for sure.

Brian Slagel: The record was incredible. Honestly, I'm not a huge fan of *Kill 'Em All*, but *Ride The Lightning* was tremendous and then they made this album that just changed it up again.

Eric Peterson: It had more production, it sounded cleaner. *Sanitarium*, everyone was proud of that. That was killer. It was everybody's song. It was the great hope. It was like, 'Listen to the production on that, you can sound as good as a Rainbow record'. It was *that* classic. It was very inspiring.

Gary Holt: Fuck, first time I heard *Battery*, it was like, 'That's awesome'.

Gary Holt: Paul Baloff and I started crafting Exodus in our own vision – which was basically brutality and violence. The audience responded in kind, and when Ruthie's Inn opened, it got really insane.

Eric Peterson: Baloff would say, "Any poseurs out there, we want to see their blood on the stage." The best way to put it would be some kind of Mayan sacrifice ritual.

Metallica take a break from recording *Master Of Puppets*, Copenhagen, December 1985.

ROSS HALFIN X2

Robb Flynn (Vio-lence guitarist/future Machine Head singer): At one Exodus show at Ruthie's, this dude had a cow leg bone, and he's in the pit running around. This big fuckin' dude, running around clubbing people with this cow bone…

Lars Ulrich: I know our British counterparts drank a lot, but in some ways it felt like we drank more. In America it was all about the fucking vodka bottles, jumping in the vodka bottles, and anything went from there.

Eric Peterson: Metallica would go to our shows a lot. I'd always see James or Kirk. Lars would pop in, wasted out of his mind. I remember James sitting at Ruthie's with his hat on backwards. He was just slamming the table with both fists and shouting 'THE HAUNTING… THE HAUNTING…'.

Gary Holt: The birth of the violent thrasher was Ruthie's Inn, nowhere else. You had people like the late, great Toby Haines head-walking. I've seen that guy make nearly 25 feet using people's heads as stepping-stones. The guy was about 6'5" and he had some weight to him. The Exodus song *Bonded By Blood* was about the shows at Ruthie's when there was broken glass all over the stage and people were all cut up. It was pre-being worried about Hepatitis C and all those things.

Robb Flynn: There's this kind of myth about the thrash thing that it was all friendly violent fun but it wasn't. There was such and element of danger, such an element of violence, it wasn't safe to go.

Eric Peterson: No-one brought guns, it was all switchblades. Everybody had a switchblade.

Ozzy and his support band in 1986: "I thought they were making fun of me."

Bob Nalbandian (*Headbanger* magazine founder): Everyone thinks speed metal, or thrash metal as it was later called, originated in San Francisco, but you gotta remember three out of the Big Four bands started in Los Angeles.

It was to Los Angeles that Dave Mustaine had retreated after being kicked out of Metallica in 1982 for his drinking and drug use. He channelled his fury into Megadeth, the band he founded with bassist Dave Ellefson. The pair are thrash metal's own Toxic Twins – fully-fledged junkies who struggled to juggle their musical careers and their heroin habits (they spent half of their $8000 advance for 1985 debut album, *Killing Is My Business… And Business Is Good*, on drugs, alcohol and food). Despite that, much was expected from the follow-up, *Peace Sells… But Who's Buying?*.

Dave Mustaine (Megadeth singer/guitarist): I felt what we had done with Metallica was so fresh and invigorating. I'd been living on my own since I was 15. Every day was get up and play guitar and sell pot for a living. That was my existence. To be able to have a real job playing music, c'mon… Once that looked like it wasn't going to happen, I went into conservation mode. That's when Megadeth was created, because I had survival skills ever since I was a kid and my parents got divorced. I'd like to think there was a lot of great music

"I CALL MYSELF A CHRISTIAN."

Ex-wild-child Dave Mustaine: he's on a mission from God.

For the first 20 years of his career, Megadeth frontman Dave Mustaine was regarded as one of the most reliably obnoxious figures in the metal world. From the sneer that never left his lips to his reputation for drug and drink-fuelled antagonism and that filter-free verbosity that repeatedly got him into trouble, he was celebrated as one of the most influential thrash metal pioneers and, more frequently, an unapologetic, Olympic-standard asshole. As a result, his conversion to Christianity came as surprise.

"I found a way of life for me," he states. "I believe in God and I call myself a Christian. Most people will say 'Uh-oh, he's going to become one of those people who say one thing and then act a different way', but that's not who I am. I'm so grateful that people haven't totally written me off after the terrible things I've done. I'm so blessed."

In fact, Dave Mustaine has long been driven by a strong sense of morality, even though his long-term addiction to heroin and tendency to shed band members like so many idly crushed dog-ends might have suggested otherwise. Outspoken and eminently quote-worthy from very early on in his career, there was something deliciously but familiarly contrary about his newfound status as metal's premier servant of the Lord.

A devoted family man who lives with wife Pamela and two children in a lavish faux-French chateau in the San Diego hills, Mustaine has hardly used his success to propagate any religious message and there is little evidence that finding God has had a detrimental effect on his music. But becoming a Christian has led him to the peace of mind that always seemed out of reach in the past.

"The stuff that pissed me off when I was in my 20s doesn't piss me off now I'm 50," he said. "I donated one of my guitars to be auctioned to buy an oven for this soup kitchen down in South Africa. That's the stuff that makes me feel good. Using the gift that I've been given to help other people."

Metal's ultimate asshole reborn as one of the good guys? Mustaine makes no such bold claims, but as he passes his half-century, he's definitely trying...

Megadeth's new album, Th1rt3en, is out now on Roadrunner.

WORDS: DOM LAWSON

Anthrax: the fourth wheel on the Big Four wagon.

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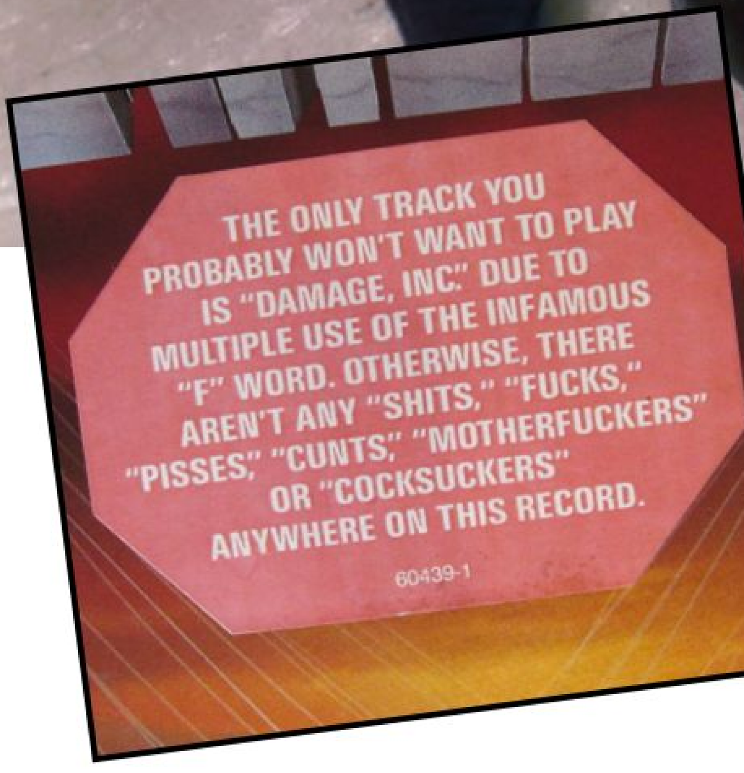


that came out of the creation of Megadeth, but I don't really think it was destined to be any different because there was just so much personality between the four of us.

Dave Ellefson (Megadeth bassist): Living in Los Angeles we were fish out of water because we knew our greener pastures were almost anywhere but Los Angeles. There was an underbelly and an underworld. We were basically homeless and going with any girl we could move in with who would take in a struggling musician, living in my van or our rehearsal room in downtown Los Angeles. Our drug habits were certainly a major inconvenience to lifestyle and certainly cash flow. We went down to hell.

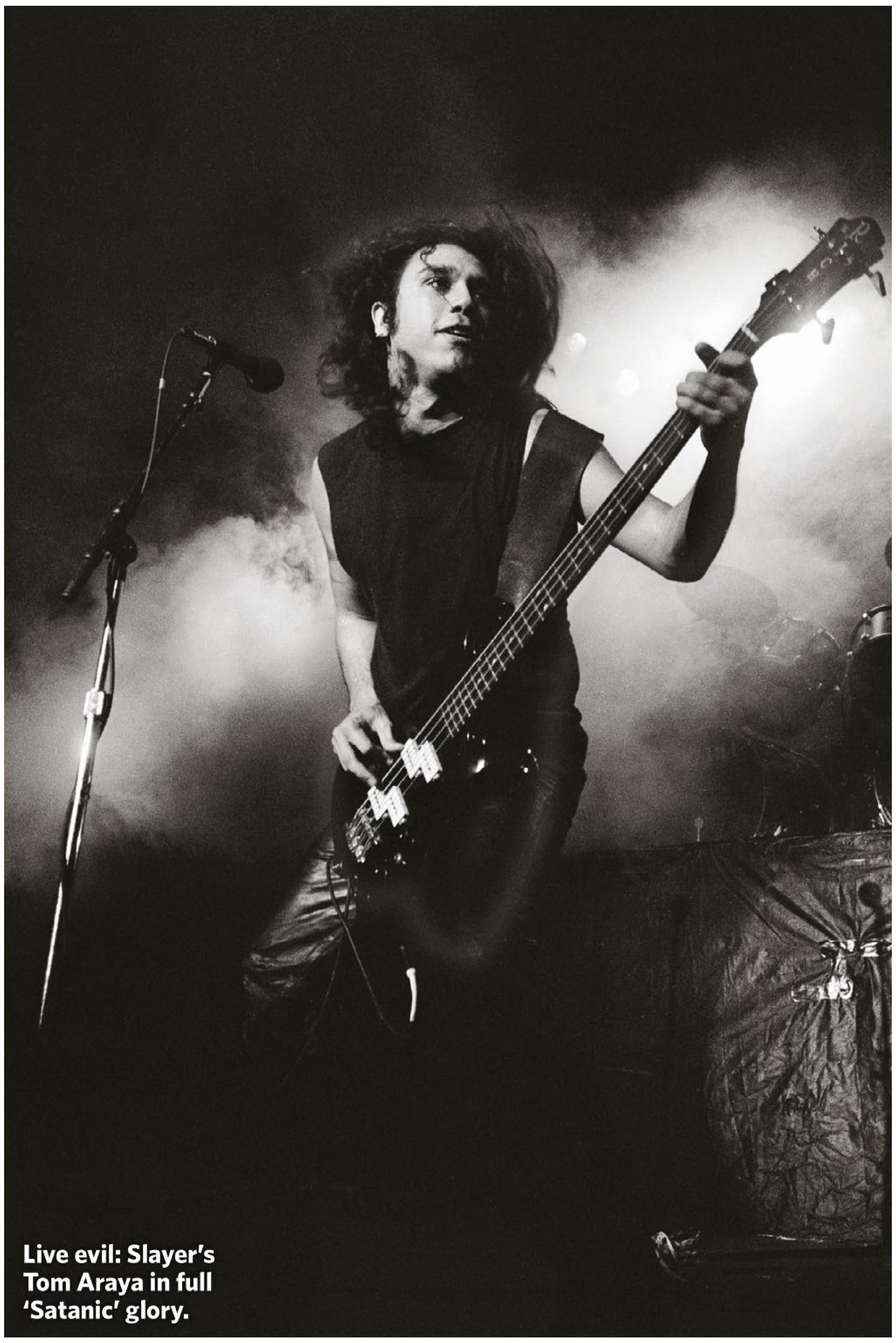
Dave Mustaine: The city we lived in, Los Angeles, it was dangerous. We were dangerous. All of that in-fighting with the glam bands versus the metal bands, man it was dangerous, especially with the heroin. You got guys in Mötley Crüe driving around in exotic cars, people dying behind the wheel. It was a dangerous time back then…

Dave Ellefson: Me and Dave were the two who had no back-up plan, no day job, no college degree, we put it all on the line. Which is why we'd be homeless together. And those things are the DNA of a great band. That's what Megadeth had.

Dave Mustaine: There were so many days when the other guys were dope sick, lying on the floor puking and shitting their pants and I was thinking 'Glamorous life!', you know? But the actual making of the record was much more enjoyable for me. We went into The Music Grinder, which was in was a kind of cool, fashionable area and there were a lot of hot chicks around, a good hamburger joint across the street, a cool hot dog place at the end of the road, and we were living hand to mouth at the time. If we had enough money to get our heroin and a good hot dog, it was a good day.

Bob Nalbandian: I interviewed Dave Mustaine soon after he left, or got kicked out of, Metallica. I thought they were really cocky and to a degree pretty arrogant, but in a good way. If you read or listen back to some of those early interviews I did with Mustaine, you can tell that they had this 'I don't give a fuck' attitude and this total determination to succeed and be the best.

Dave Mustaine: I remember I was smitten with Belinda Carlisle from The Go-Go's at the time. She came down to the studio to see me one time, and I'd just snorted some heroin and taken a big hit on a joint and she knocks on the door. She was apparently really anti-drugs, and I was totally wasted. I don't know what would have happened if I'd been sober. Maybe we would've dated and had lots of little Go-Go babies. I don't know, man, but that was one of the lowest points of making that record, having that opportunity dangled in front of my face and losing it.


Live evil: Slayer's Tom Araya in full 'Satanic' glory.

Hetfield and Hammett: "I never expected Master to be a success," says Kirk.

Megadeth in 1986: Dave Mustaine and Dave Ellefson, right.

SLAYER: GETTY; METALLICA: GETTY; MEGADETH: GETTY

Lars Ulrich: Whether you heard that record (*Peace Sells*) for the first time in 1986, or you hear this record for the first time today or tomorrow, *Peace Sells* is a great heavy metal album. Nothing more, nothing less. It has stood the test of time.

Dave Mustaine: Let me tell you, *Peace Sells* wasn't so much a record as it was a way of life. That was it. It was your friends and your enemies.

On March 3, 1986, Metallica's *Master Of Puppets* appears in stores with a fake parental warning sticker: "The only track you probably won't want to play is *Damage, Inc.* due to multiple use of the infamous 'F' word. Otherwise, there aren't any 'shits,' 'fucks,' 'pisses,' 'cunts,' 'motherfuckers,' or 'cocksuckers' anywhere on this record'." Three weeks later, at the Kansas Coliseum, Wichita, Metallica begin a five month stint supporting Ozzy Osbourne on his US tour. It would help propel *Master Of Puppets* to its peak position of No. 29 on the Billboard charts – a feat unthinkable even 12 months before.

Mick Wall (journalist): Mötley Crüe went out with Ozzy, came back stars. Def Leppard went out with Ozzy, came back stars. Metallica went out with Ozzy, came back stars. That's how it worked.

Brian Slagel: The shows with Ozzy were the first time any of these speed metal bands had broken out of the very small scene that they'd come from.

Ozzy Osbourne: I would walk past their bus before shows and hear them playing old Sabbath songs, and I thought they were making fun of me. They wouldn't talk to me and always kept their distance. I thought it was really weird. I asked their tour manager about it and said, 'Is this their idea of a joke?' And he said, 'No, they think you're gods'.

Lars Ulrich: It was the first time we got out to middle America. It was the first time that Metallica showed up on the radar screens.

Gary Holt: Metallica were all friends of mine, so I was super happy for them. Soon as they did *Ride The Lightning* we knew they were onto something. Then it was *Master Of Puppets*, and you know, they were just better than everyone else.

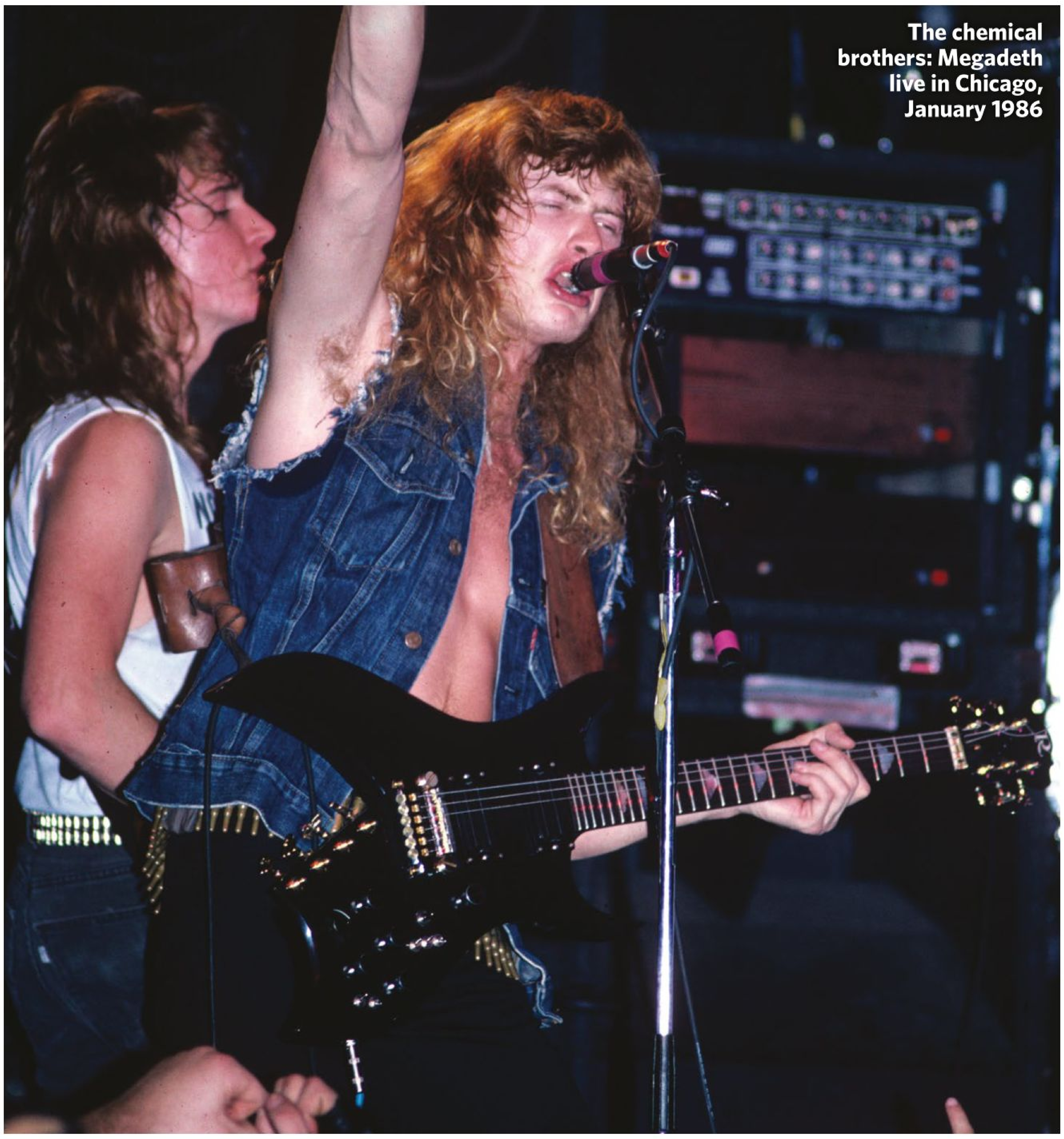
Lars Ulrich: I remember the last date of the Ozzy tour, in Hampton, Virginia. Our manager, Cliff Burnstein, came down from New York for the last show. So we're all sitting there in the back of the bus and he said, "You've now sold enough records to go and buy houses." We'd been on the Ozzy tour, at that point for five months. All of us, band and crew on one bus, drinking 12 hours a day, fucking, just living every crazy fantasy about girls and heavy metal. We were completely ignorant to what was going on, you know, on that side of it. I remember Cliff sitting there and going "*Fuuuuckkk*, I can buy a house." The rest of us didn't want to buy a house – we wanted to stay on tour.

Kirk Hammett: I never expected it to be the success it turned out to be. Compared to what else was in the charts, it was a huge orange in amongst the bunch of apples.

Mick Wall: The big difference between Metallica and the rest was this: they had a great record, but they also had Lars and they had Mensch and Cliff Burnstein at Q-Prime. They knew they weren't going to get on MTV, so they very cleverly said, "We're not doing a video." At the same time, Lars is talking to Michael Alago, head of A&R at Elektra, and to promoters and all of this. They were grassroots and corporate at the same time. Lars was a man you could do business with. That was the difference.

Charlie Benante (Anthrax drummer): At the time, *Headbanger's Ball* was just starting on MTV. It would piss you off that you only got an hour, and even then you'd get maybe one video in amongst Bon Jovi and Poison, but it was happening. Things were changing.

"If we had enough money to get our heroin and a hot dog, it was a good day."
Dave Mustaine



The chemical brothers: Megadeth live in Chicago, January 1986

Slayer: banned by their label.

Anthrax: persistence of tan.

MEGADETH: GENE AMBO/ICONICPIX; SLAYER: GETTY; ANTHRAX: EBET ROBERTS/GETTY

Thanks to *Master Of Puppets*, thrash metal had a foothold in the mainstream. Other bands were lining up behind Metallica. One was Slayer, who were working on their third album, *Reign In Blood*, while Metallica were on the road with Ozzy.

Brian Slagel: There was a competition between the bands over who could be the fastest. Back then, it was called speed metal rather than thrash metal. So Slayer wanted to be the fastest and the heaviest – 'We have to one-up with everybody else's stuff'.

Tom Araya (Slayer bassist/vocalist): We took the black metal thing from Venom, and we took it to a different level. The idea behind *Reign In Blood* was not to do another slow album, like *Hell Awaits*. A really fast album with short songs. That was the thought process.

Kerry King (Slayer guitarist): What do I remember about writing the songs? [Thinks for a long time] No, not a fucking clue, man…

Brian Slagel: Somebody told me that Rick Rubin was interested in the band, and I thought, "Okay, that's interesting, Def Jam, a rap label…" I went and met them, and Rubin was definitely more of a metal guy than I thought he'd be. They really wanted the band. They were the most aggressive of anybody that wanted the band.

Tom Araya: What did Rick Rubin bring to it? His musical ear. He made it tolerable. He gave it the Midas touch. What happened on *Reign In Blood* is that although it's fast, you can hear everything.

Brian Slagel: The demos of *Reign In Blood* were around 34 minutes, but the finished album's about six minutes shorter or something.

Tom Araya: We did the mixes, and I was thinking, "28 minutes..?" I said to Andy (Wallace, engineer), "Is that the total of everything?" He was like, "Er, yeah…" We asked if that was gonna be a problem with Rick. He looked at it and said, 'Well, an album constitutes 10 songs and you got 10 songs…'

Jeff Hanneman: When we got the finished record and saw the cover (artist Larry Carroll's painting of Satan being carried by men with erections), I was like, "Yeah!" I had the original framed in my house for years.

Kerry King: I thought that the cover looked fucking cool and evil. I wasn't bothered about everything else. I really didn't care.

Tom Araya: It was upsetting when (Def Jam's distributor) Columbia refused to release it. It was because of that song, *Angel Of Death* (about Nazi physician Josef Mengele).

Jeff Hanneman: I'd seen a documentary and it looked like a cool subject in that if you want to write about evil, and that's what we wanted to write about, then you won't get too many human beings that are more so.

Kerry King: It's written in the way that a show on a documentary channel is written. It relates what happened. It doesn't try to say it was good or bad.

Lars Ulrich: I think Slayer were the most interesting because they were so extreme. They didn't give a fuck about anything, which was cool.

"There are times when I romanticise those days. Life seemed a lot more simple back then."
James Hetfield

On September 10, 1986. Metallica begin a headline tour of Europe at Cardiff's St David's Hall, with Anthrax as the support. On September 27, after a gig in Stockholm, they board their tourbus for the overnight journey to Copenhagen. In the early hours of the morning, near Ljunby, the bus hits a patch of black ice and flips off the road. Cliff Burton is thrown from his bunk and through the window. The bus falls on top of him, killing

him. Earlier, the bassist had tossed a coin with Hetfield to decide who got the bunk. It is thrash metal's first big reality check.

Charlie Benante: We had travelled on ahead. We said goodbye, got to the venue to find kids saying, "Did you hear what happened to Metallica?" I'd had people die in my family, but this was strange.

James Hetfield: I saw the bus lying right on him. I saw his legs sticking out. I freaked. The bus driver was trying to yank the blanket out from under him to use for other people. I just went, "Don't fucking do that!" I wanted to kill the guy. Our tour manager said, "Let's get the band together and take them back to the hotel." And I'm thinking, "The band? There ain't no band any more. It's just three guys."

Gem Howard: There was a Japanese journalist called Terri Mashizuke. She was like a schoolgirl, a tiny little thing. She came into the office in floods of tears. It takes a lot to make a journalist cry.

Eric Peterson: We'd set up a gig for [Megaforce Records co-owners] Jonny and Marsha Z. Jonny was close to Metallica at that point. We were practicing, and Jonny was just staring at the bass drum. He was lost. He said, 'Cliff died last night', and he started crying. We all shed some tears.

Kirk Hammett: In the last four or five months of his life, Cliff started playing a lot more guitar. He'd single out little licks when he listened to music and would have me figure them out for him. I remember him really loving the way Ed King of Lynyrd Skynyrd played guitar.

FADE TO BLACK

How Metallica gave birth to thrash metal – and then killed it.

Megadeth bassist Dave Ellefson has more perspective than most on the thrash metal scene. "They talk about the Big Four," says Ellefsen. "Quite honestly, there was a Big One, and that was Metallica. They were miles and miles ahead of all of us."

So far ahead, in fact, that Metallica almost immediately outgrew the genre they had single-handedly inspired. By their third album, *Master Of Puppets*, I was warned during a visit to the studio where they were recording it not to even mention the word thrash. Released the same year as Slayer's *Reign In Blood*, Lars was content, he said, "to let Slayer run with the whole thrash thing now. They want it, they can have it."

Which is exactly what happened and over the next five years, as Metallica's ambitions stayed apace with their rocketing success, their peers ceased to be Megadeth and Slayer, but Guns N' Roses and Bon Jovi, then the biggest rock bands in the world. Thus, in 1991: the Black album, Metallica's sonically-exquisite, fully-textured, ballads-and-all assault on the summit of Everest-like rock popularity. Their attempt to win the hearts and minds of an audience that wouldn't have been seen dead listening to 'thrash' that proved so extraordinarily successful it not only propelled Metallica onto the same stratospheric plain as Led Zeppelin and the Rolling Stones, it did more to kill off thrash than grunge – its contemporaneous black sheep first cousin – ever could.

Up until that moment, the other thrash 'originals' – Slayer, Anthrax and Megadeth – had carved out a significant niche just by not being Metallica. After the Black album, though, the game was up. Incinerated in the furnace-like jet-stream of Metallica's commercial lift-off, thrash had become little more than an interesting footnote in the history of rock – until Metallica came back nearly 20 years later and breathed new life into it again with the disingenuously titled Big Four.

Metallica's collaboration with Lou Reed, Lulu, is out now on Vertigo.

WORDS: MICK WALL

Dave Mustaine: I always thought Cliff was a great player. We didn't get a chance to have the kind of relationship that everyone wants to pretend that they had with him. It's like the guys who come up and say they went to school with me. You know what, there weren't enough seats in that classroom.

Lars Ulrich: I was obviously grieving, but then the anger started setting in when I realised it's not new that people in rock'n'roll die, but it's usually self-inflicted in terms of drink or drug abuse. He had nothing to do with it. It's so completely useless.

Brian Slagel: It must have been about four weeks later, Lars called me up and said: "We need a bass player. Do you have any ideas?" My first thought was Joey Vera from Armoured Saint, but he wanted to stay with those guys. Then I said, "We have this band called Flotsam And Jetsam, and the bass player's a huge Metallica fan. I think he's the right guy." Flotsam was Jason Newsted's band. He wrote everything. I told him, "You're going from a position where you can do that to a place where you'll have no say. This is the Lars and James show. You'll just be the bass player. Are you okay with that?" About a month later, he was in the band.

By the time Metallica made their return to the stage for the first time since the death of Cliff Burton, thrash metal had reached critical mass. Metallica found themselves joined at the top table by Slayer and Megadeth, whose albums *Reign In Blood* and *Peace Sells… But Who's Buying?*, were released within three weeks of each other in October and November on major label-distributed Def Jam and EMI subsidiary Capitol respectively. Both landed in the all-important US Top 100. The scene's detractors might not have liked it, but thrash metal had gone overground. Twenty five years on, 1986 looks and sounds like a landmark year. Things would never be the same for any of the bands involved.

Brian Slagel: They were all maturing and growing as musicians, and they were getting more money and time to do things, and they were working with better people. There was a hunger and a newness to what those American bands were doing, all that kind of culminated in that year.

Gem Howard: You get these peak periods in rock. 1956-57 is the rock'n'roll peak. 1966-67 was the hippy stuff. '76-77 was the punk thing. '86-87 was thrash. It's the 10-year cycle that seems to have finished now.

Charlie Benante: We went from Megaforce to Island, which was home to everyone from U2 to Bob Marley to Anthrax.

Bob Nalbandian: The major labels' mentality was: "Let's cash in on the current trend and milk it for all it's worth." And that's the reason why in the few years that followed, major labels started scooping up and signing all sorts of 'thrash' bands and it became over-saturated with a lot of crap, which eventually led to the decline of thrash in the late 80s and throughout the 90s.

Dave Ellefson: Getting on a major label was about getting the door open for our fans. 1986 was a big turning-point year, because the ones in the major labels who were fans began to fight the good fight. In order to be great, you gotta be different. And we knew we were different.

Gary Holt: Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer and Anthrax far and away sold the most records. I've read someone saying: "Exodus, Testament, those bands were followers, that's why they're not in the Big Four." Exodus precedes everyone but Metallica, but the issue comes down to sales. I have no problem with that. Those bands are all great friends of mine.

Dave Mustaine: We went through a lot of time of feeling like the red-headed step-child, so it was a pretty good feeling, yeah.

Jeff Hanneman: I made my mark on the world, man. I did something. I can die happy.

James Hetfield: There are times when I romanticise it. Life seemed a lot more simple back then.

Additional sources: Enter Night: Metallica, The Biography, by Mick Wall [Orion], Metallica Unbound, by KJ Doughton [Grand Central Publishing], New York Times, Guitar World, Revolver.

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Metallica and 'Edna' on the Justice tour.

...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

Master Of Puppets had broken big. But with Cliff Burton's death and Slayer and Guns N' Roses breaking new ground, Metallica's next step was uncertain…

Words: **Mick Wall**

Sometimes a breakthrough album becomes such a landmark that it gives an artist the freedom to do whatever they want. And equally, sometimes the logical next step is to make the follow-up to that breakthrough as similar as possible – a sequel that repeats the winning formula and cements their growing status with their core constituency of fans.

This was the position Metallica found themselves in when it came to planning their fourth album: not just the follow-up to their breakthrough hit, *Master Of Puppets*, but their first without bassist and old-soul Cliff Burton. The safe option would have been to make, in effect Master II – to both cash-in on their now established winning formula and prove that Burton's replacement by Jason Newsted had been achieved seamlessly.

When, however, drummer Lars Ulrich and singer-guitarist James Hetfield came to sit down and talk about it one afternoon in October 1987, while winding through The Riff Tapes – the compilation of ideas that had emerged at soundcheck maybe, or odd musical movements Lars would hum and James would turn into chords on his guitar – they decided not to follow any of these rules and instead go for broke with something so completely different to what had come before as to be virtually unrecognisable from the Metallica template.

Or rather, Lars did.

High on the million-selling success around the world of the *Garage Days Re-Revisited* single EP and mini-album CD, and unduly taken with the rule-breaking sound of the debut album from a bunch of LA ne'er-do-wells called Guns N' Roses, released the same year, he felt the time had come for Metallica to jettison the thrash metal lifeboat and go for a whole new approach. James was inured to Lars' non-stop talk of world domination and, still lost and unsure how to proceed without Cliff's bullshit-o-meter to guide them, merely nodded his assent. They would just put the songs together as usual and see what came up, right?

Wrong.

Certainly there was nothing new to their approach in that respect, the two working from home alone on a four-track, Kirk Hammett invited down at a later stage to consider his lead guitar parts, Jason not invited at all on the pretext that with only four tracks to work with there was no room for bass at that stage anyway. As a result, of the nine tracks eventually slated for the album – all essentially Hetfield-Ulrich compositions – just three would also bear Kirk's surname, just one Jason's, and one had Cliff's: a posthumous work melded from "some bits and pieces" the bass player had left on tape, over which James intoned a four-line poem Cliff had also left behind entitled To Live Is To Die. In fact, the only big difference initially was the decision to record the album closer to home this time, in Los Angeles, a choice rooted, paradoxically, in a newfound conservatism – at least, away from the stage – and their sudden desire to be close to their various partners.

This was one aspect of their lives the young Metallica went out of their way to keep off-limits from the press, even the almost venally talkative Lars, who became uncharacteristically tongue-tied the first time he introduced me to his English-born wife, Debbie. A fun, fair-haired, girl from the Midlands, the two had met in London in 1984 and married early in 1987, during the brief hiatus when James was still nursing his broken wrist, the result of a skateboarding accident. It wasn't that Lars hid his wife from the press, it just happened to be one of the very few things he didn't talk about. Plus, ladies man Lars didn't like to think of anyone cramping his style and while he clearly loved being around Debbie, the marriage was doomed to end just three years later.

These, after all, were Lars' wild years and, with the band finally taking off, it was no time to be married to its principle party animal. As he later said, for a while they had considered naming their next album, Wild Chicks, Fast Cars and Lots of Drugs, such was the state of play in Metalliworld at the time. How could any homespun, working class English girl hope to compete with that?

Kirk, too, had chosen just this moment to marry his pretty American girlfriend, Rebecca (Becky), the two tying the knot in December, just a few weeks before the band began work on the new album. From the outside, Kirk and Becky looked like the perfect couple, almost a mirror image of each other, with their long curly hair, elfin faces and large brown eyes. Becky was ditzy, airy-fairy, and fitted in neatly with Kirk's own public persona as the spliff-sucking, comic book collecting, easy-going hippie minstrel. In fact, there was a new edge starting to emerge in the guitarist's character as he began living out his own rock star fantasies, and cocaine began to match marijuana as his drug of choice. Their marriage too would end after just a few short years.

Jason, who had split from his longstanding girlfriend Lauren Collins, a college student from Phoenix, shortly after joining Metallica, now became involved with a new girlfriend, Judy, who would become the first Mrs Newsted over the coming year, though they got divorced even quicker than Lars or Kirk, deciding they'd made a mistake almost immediately.

The only one who didn't get married at this point was James and he, ironically, was the one perhaps most deeply in love. Indeed, his girlfriend Kristen Martinez would later inspire one of Metallica's best-loved songs and one of the cornerstones of their far more widespread popularity in the 1990s, *Nothing Else Matters*. That, though, was the only time James even semi-acknowledged his affair with Kristen publicly, even going as far as to later claim not to have written the song about her at all, so deep was his hurt when they too broke up in the wake of Metallica's now ▷

"Everyone was pleased with ...*And Justice For All* when we'd finished. And then people were not so pleased..."

Producer Flemming Rasmussen

Appetite for destruction: Metallica's fourth album was influenced by the rise of Guns N' Roses.

"They hired me because they really liked the Guns N' Roses records. [But then the message from management] was that they do things the Metallica way. I was in the middle." Producer Mike Clink

rocketing success.

That, however, was in the future. There were no love songs planned for the fourth Metallica album. Instead, Lars was determined to place the emphasis on a new, harder edge. Besotted with the Guns N' Roses album, *Appetite For Destruction*, which contained so many swear words radio wouldn't play it, most of all he wanted to ensure Metallica didn't get left behind by what he called "the new dicks on the block." He later recalled listening to the first single from the *Appetite* album, *It's So Easy* on a flight home to San Francisco and being unable to believe the unashamed misogyny of the line, *'Turn around bitch, I got a use for you…'*, nor the pay-off at the end of the final verse when singer W. Axl Rose yells *'Why don't you just… fuck off!'*

"It just blew my fuckin' head off," Lars excitedly told James. "It was the way Axl said it. It was so venomous. It was so fucking real and so fucking angry." It was the start of an obsession with Axl and Guns N' Roses that would eventually see both bands touring together, though it would not be one shared with James.

When it became apparent that Flemming Rasmussen, the producer who had overseen both *Master Of Puppets* and its equally barrier-crashing predecessor, *Ride The Lightning*, would not be available as quickly as they would have liked, Lars, secretly delighted, seized on the situation to put forward a more exciting alternative: Mike Clink, the Baltimore-born producer who'd overseen the recording of *Appetite For Destruction*.

Clink had begun his career as an engineer at New York's Record Plant studios, assisting producer Ron Nevison on hit albums by soft rock giants such as Jefferson Starship, Heart and, most notably, Survivor's huge 1982 hit single and album, *Eye of the Tiger*. Clink's main attributes, according to GN'R guitarist Slash, were "incredible guitar sounds and a tremendous amount of patience." Smart enough to realise the records he'd made before were essentially "pop albums", he'd listened carefully when Slash had played him Aerosmith albums in preparation for the *Appetite* sessions. Interestingly, the album Axl had asked him to take special note of had been Metallica's *Ride The Lightning*.

With One On One studios in North Hollywood booked for the first three months of 1988, Lars asked band manager Peter Mensch to put a deal together that would bring Clink in as producer on the new album. Clink, a shrewd operator looking for a project that would extend his newfound reputation as the go-to guy for cutting edge rock bands, was intrigued enough by the approach to accept at first time of asking. Nevertheless, on the surface it seemed an odd fit: Clink was known for capturing a looser, bluesy, as-live feel in the studio; Metallica known more for their almost icily precise sheet-metal riffs and machine-like rhythms.

Somehow it would be Clink's job to marry the two. As he says now, "They hired me because they enjoyed [and] really liked the Guns N' Roses records." However, the message he got in his initial conversation with Mensch "was that they do things the Metallica way. And I didn't really know what that was until I got into the middle of it."

James was even less sure. He was no fan of the GN'R record. As far as James could see, Clink wasn't anything special – just another of Lars' passing fancies. He watched patiently though while they searched for a drum sound that seemed to match whatever requirements were going through both Lars' and Mike's heads, then lost patience when it came to his guitar sound. Although they managed to do what they always did at the start of an album and lay down a couple of rough-hewn covers in order to iron out any potential problems – in this case, Budgie's *Breadfan* and Diamond

GETTY

Head's *The Prince* – instead of smoothing out their differences, it only highlighted how far apart their thinking still was, especially between Hetfield and Clink. "I just flipped out," said James, "couldn't hang with it anymore."

It put Clink in an awkward position. "As much I believe they wanted me to put my magic on the tracks," he says, "I think that they were used to doing things on their own and doing it their own way.

"I always felt that I was in the wings, waiting until Flemming got free or they could convince him to work on the record [because] at that moment in time it just wasn't working... They bristled at someone trying to tell them what to do. And I think it was as much my fault as their fault. You know, I had just come off of the Guns N' Roses record and doing things my way, and having my say. And I kind of ran into a bit of a brick wall and it was difficult for me."

Clink also felt that "the absence of Cliff was a little unsettling to them... in the back of their minds maybe they wanted something more familiar, because that was a big step without him."

Whatever the real problem was, by the end of the third week recording, Lars was on the phone to Flemming, virtually begging him to rearrange his schedule and fly out to rescue the sessions.

"Lars called me and said they were going nowhere and they were getting fed up with it and asked if I was available just in case," says Rasmussen. "I told him I had a lot of gigs booked and if he needed me there I should know pretty fast... I got called up next day and he said come on over. Like, 'When can you be here?'"

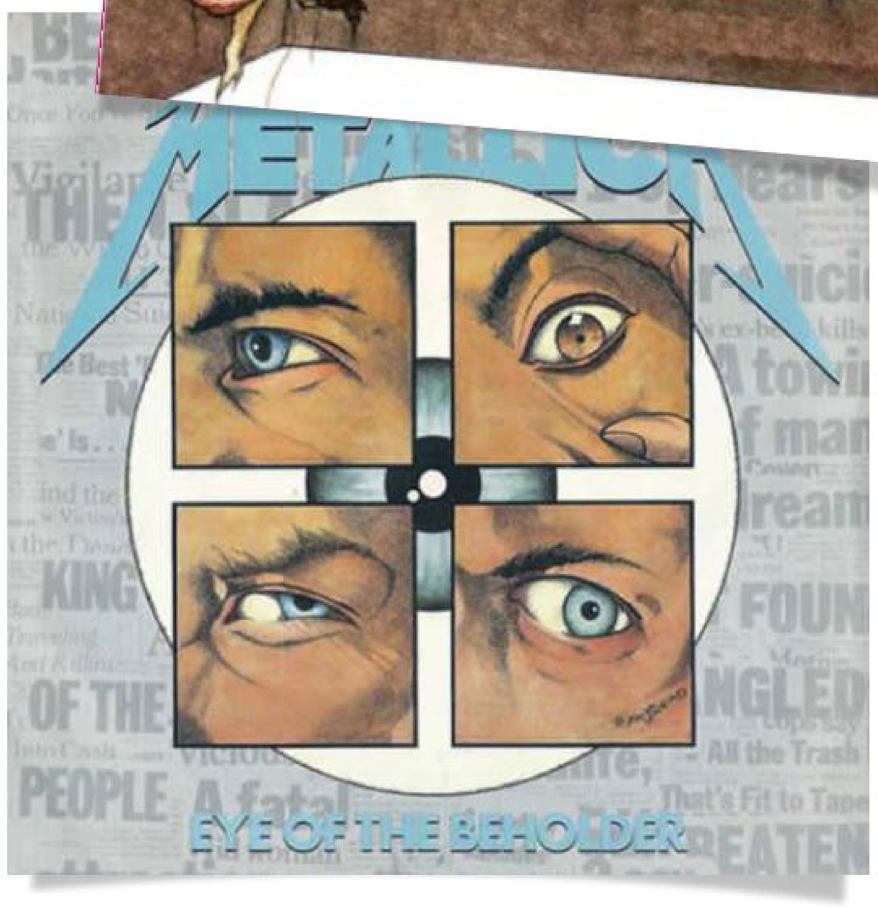
Arriving at One On One two weeks later, Rasmussen insisted the band start from scratch, keeping the rough cover versions, which could later be used as B-sides for singles, and just two of the drum tracks Clink had recorded with them, for the tracks *Harvester Of Sorrow* and *The Shortest Straw*. Flemming thinks it didn't work with Clink because he "probably expected them to be more of a band-band where everybody played at the same time and you kind of took it from there. And they were nowhere near that at that time...

"They were fucking around with guitar sounds and had been so for like two or three weeks, and James was really *unpleased*," he laughs. "When I spoke to Lars, he said, 'We're not gonna do another Master. It's gonna be more in your face. It's gonna be as pumped and as upfront as possible'."

The end result was – as Lars had ordered – the hardest-sounding Metallica album yet, titled *...And Justice For All*, after the final line from the Declaration of Independence, used here as shock-horror metaphor for the more general theme of anger at injustice that permeates every track. The trouble was that angry noise appeared to be all there was to most of it, to the point of deadening the emotions it was trying so hard to evoke; a roomful of mirrors in which all the reflections are hideously distorted.

Indeed, the whole thing sounded strangely flat, the drums, busy but tinny, the guitars, revved-up but muted, the vocals almost uniformly shouted and aggressive. If this was Metallica becoming more in-your-face, the effect was to push all but the most avid, hear-no-evil fan away – as unlovely a creation as anything Dr Frankenstein had sewn and bolted together in his laboratory.

It was hard not to conclude that for the first time, Metallica was not playing by instinct but doing something it thought it should. Slayer's 1986 Rick Rubin-produced *Reign In Blood* had stolen the thrash crown, and Guns N' Roses were now threatening to beat them to the punch when it came to subverting more mainstream rock tastes and Metallica were playing catch-up. With only Lars' dreams and James' nightmares to guide them, Cliff's influence on Metallica would from this moment on be felt most powerfully by his absence. And, to begin with, they were utterly lost.



Writing about "mental anguish is what I like," James would boast. "Physical pain is nothing compared to mental scarring – that shit sticks with you forever. People dying in your life always makes you think." Had Cliff's death become one of those things he'd thought about *too much?*

The first Metallica album clearly built for CD – with a total running time of over 65 minutes – the track sequencing still followed the same template as *Ride* and *Master*, beginning with a rallying-call opener, in this case *Blackened*, a howl of rage against the destruction of the environment, that was musically very much in the mould of *Master* opener *Battery*, and the only track on the album on which Newsted got a co-credit.

From there it was on to the self-consciously epic title track. Built around a quirky drum tattoo and the sound of marching guitars, James railing against how *'Justice is lost / Justice is raped / Justice is gone...'* At almost 10 minutes long, *Justice* digs its own grave and buries itself, eliciting a huge sigh of relief from the listener when it finally – finally – slams to a halt. It's not that it's such a bad Metallica track – it would have shone more on *Ride*, perhaps, where the band was still establishing its credentials, and Hammett's guitars, for which he receives the first of his three co-writing credits, are exemplary.

It's just that the whole endeavour is so earnest, bitter, unrelenting, the unhappy sound of one man and his pain. Similarly, the samey-sounding tribute-to-Cliff instrumental *To Live Is to Die*, a sincere gesture rendered almost meaningless by the fact it's the longest track on an album choked with tracks that outstayed their welcome.

The rest of the album – with one notable exception – continued along the same dark, tangled path. Again, it's not that tracks like *The Shortest Straw* or *The Frayed Ends of Sanity* are outright bad – both typically brutish rockers that would have taken pride on either of the first two Metallica albums – but after the sophisticated production and arrangements on *Master* and the warm, all-inclusive atmosphere of *Garage Days*, more was now expected of Metallica. Right at the moment they should have been delivering another sonic milestone, they had reverted to boorish type. Only what would have sounded scoldingly new four years before now sounded lumpen and off the pace.

Even the first single from the album, *Harvester of Sorrow*, was horribly plodding. "Lyrically, this song is about someone who leads a very normal life, has a wife and three kids, and all of a sudden one day, he just snaps and starts killing the people around him," Lars explained at the time. If only the music had sounded even half as interesting. Still, it reached No. 20 in the UK charts thanks to the by-now-huge Metallica fan-base and the variety of different formats Phonogram were now able to market the record in.

The track fed next to US radio, but not physically released as a single, was *Eye of the Beholder*. Coming straight after the title track on the album, it sounded simply like more of the same, its saving grace on radio that its faded-in staccato rhythm was attention-grabbing enough to sustain the listener through the first couple of minutes before its droning repetitiveness finally zeroed you out. *'Do you see what I see,'* James intones solemnly, *'truth is an offence...'*

And nobody, it seemed, had dared tell the band the truth about their new album.

The exception to all this – the one gleaming diamond in the dirt – was the track *One*. *One* was Metallica's most ambitious and successful musical experiment yet, and their most deeply affecting song. The macabre story of an infantryman who steps on a landmine and wakes to gradually discover he has lost everything – his arms and legs, his five senses – except his mind, which is now cast adrift, trapped in its own grim and impossible reality, *One* was both nightmare writ large and musically transcendent journey, a thrash metal *Tommy* in miniature. The protagonist's descent into living hell, wordlessly begging for death – capable of being seen both as existential metaphor for the human condition and the solipsism of the rock star life – its frantic climax also served up a state of inarticulate teenage angst like no other rock song before or since.

Partially based on the 1939 Dalton Trumbo novel, *Johnny Got His Gun*, *One* had started as a song James was thinking about based on the notion of "just being a brain and nothing else" before Cliff Burnstein suggested he read Trumbo's book. The story of Joe Bonham, a good-looking, all-American boy encouraged to fight in World War I by his patriotic father, Bonham loses his legs, eyes, ears, mouth and nose to a German shell. After coming to terms with his gruesome ▷

Lars: "Cocaine gave me another couple of hours drinking."

"I became the clown, then the punk anarchist. I'd get into fights – sometimes with Lars..."

James Hetfield

circumstances in hospital while surrounded by frankly horrified doctors and nurses, Bonham uses the only part of his physical being he is still able to control – his head – to tap out a message in Morse code: "Please kill me."

"James got a lot of input from that," said Lars.

There was another important change to their strategy they'd decided on before going into the studio: unlike *Master of Puppets*, there would be at least one recognisable single and – even more significantly – video on the next album. Despite their public posturing, 'refusing' to release singles, both James and Lars had come around to the idea of a regular Metallica single and video since the unexpected success that year of *Garage Days* and, in particular, the homemade *Cliff 'Em All* video.

That *One* might lend itself well for some sort of visual interpretation that would complement the music in an arresting, artistic way, was obvious from the start. They became even more excited by the idea when it emerged that Trumbo – a left-wing, pro-peace screenwriter hounded out of Hollywood during the McCarthy-era witch hunts of the fifties – had actually directed a film version of the book, released in 1971 at the height of the Vietnam War. Might they be able to utilise scenes from it for a possible future video?

According to Rasmussen, they had actually bought the rights to the movie "in order to use it in the video" before they had even begun recording with him. "It was not much of a movie but they liked the look of it and thought it would look great in a video." They also utilised some of the special effects on the original soundtrack, layering the sound of machinegun fire and exploding landmines over the intro to the track.

As *Stairway To Heaven* became for Led Zeppelin, *One* for Metallica represented the band at its musical apotheosis, containing all that was great and original about them in one long, incident-filled journey. From its quietly lush, heartrendingly melodic guitar intro to its steadily building mid-section, up to its volcanic, lights-out climax, its lyrics came straight to the terrifying point: *'Hold my breath as I wish for death... Now the world is gone / I'm just one...'*

This was not the standard rock stance of a Van Halen or Mötley Crüe, or even a Guns N' Roses. This was revelation, a song utterly removed from its time and its unforeseen side-effect was to alter the circumstances surrounding Metallica forever. You didn't have to be a Metallica fan to appreciate the artistry of *One*, anymore than you have to be a Zeppelin fan to adore *Stairway*. But if you were it was a milestone moment, one the band would arguably never equal.

Tellingly, the only other track after *One* that truly manages to transcend its laboured surrounds is the album's shortest, *Dyer's Eve*, its speedy razor-cut riff a moment of breathe-out relief after the tortuous slabs of prog-metal that precede it. The final track on the album, its success a mark of how heavy-handed the rest of the album sounds next to it.

It was also, interestingly, the first Hetfield lyric – *'Dear Mother / Dear Father / What is this hell you have put me through?'* – in which the singer directly addresses some of the issues of his repressed childhood.

"It's basically about this kid who's been hidden from the real world by his parents the whole time he was growing up, and now that he's in the real world he can't cope with it and is contemplating suicide," Lars explained. "It's basically a letter from the kid to his parents, asking them why they didn't

GETTY X 2

Hetfield: "The whole tour was a fog for me. Later there were a lot of dads and moms and husbands looking for me..."

expose him to the real world..."

It was an ominous foreshadow of the type of material James Hetfield would explore in deeper, more ghastly detail on the albums to come.

Ultimately, instead of being the radically different masterpiece Lars had envisaged, Justice was a sideways step at best – a miscalculation. At worst, it was a disfiguringly weird statement the band would all largely disown as time went by and better albums were made. Its only real saving grace, the extraordinary *One* – and the fact it united them in never wanting to make an album so bleak in its outlook or dire in its musical palate again. The days of Metallica the out-and-out heavy metal monster were now numbered.

The other mystifyingly weird thing about Justice was the production. As Rasmussen says, "The sound was totally dry... Thin and hard and loud." In fact, the whole album seems curiously void of reverb, the special sauce used to make the most mediocre sound sparkle in a mix. Rasmussen doesn't disagree but maintains he delivered "almost ninety-nine per cent" of the sound he was instructed to get.

"Everybody was really pleased with it once we'd finished and then about a month or so after people were starting not to be so pleased. But over the time it's probably the album that's influenced most metal bands ever."

Maybe so. Certainly David Ellefson of Megadeth wouldn't disagree. "Because it was so progressive, it was complicated. In the early days we all prided ourselves on how fast we played. Then there came a point where we prided ourselves on how complicated we could be. Musical intellectual pride or some bullshit, you know?" He laughs. "If there was just some bass in here this thing would be fuckin' heavy, you know? Really heavy..."

As Ellefson suggests, the most glaring omission from the sound on *...And Justice For All* was any evidence of Jason Newsted's bass, an unforgivable omission given that this was his first album with Metallica, and their first without Cliff Burton.

Over the years there have been a variety of reasons given for this, from the accusation that Lars and James simply turned the sounwd of Jason's bass down in the mix as another part of his hazing, to the suggestion that technically they simply didn't leave enough room in there to hear Jason's bass between James' staccato rhythm guitar and Lars' booming bass drum.

"I was so in the dirt," said Newsted, speaking more than ten years later. "I was so disappointed when I heard the final mix. I basically blocked it out, like people do with shit. We were firing on all cylinders, and shit was happening. I was just rolling with it and going forward. What was I gonna do, say we gotta go remix it?"

There were, he said, "still weird feelings going on... the first time we'd been in the studio for a real Metallica album, and Cliff's not there."

Working alone with assistant engineer Toby Wright, he had used the same bass set-up as he would for a gig. "There was no time taken about 'you place this microphone here, and this one sounds better than that... should you use a pick, should you use your fingers?' Any of the things that I know now." Recording three or four songs in a day, "basically doubling James' guitar parts," he was in the studio alone for less than a week during the whole three month period the rest of the band ⊳

Metallica with new boy Jason Newsted – his bass playing was barely audible on *Justice*.

"I was so in the dirt. I was so disappointed when I heard the final mix. I just blocked it out. What was I gonna do, say we gotta remix it?"

Jason Newsted

were working with Rasmussen. "Usually nowadays I'd take a day per song. That's what I do on albums... But back then I didn't even know anything about that shit. Just played it and that was that, right?"

Mike Clink says the lack of bass was an issue even when he was working with them. "They weren't leaving enough room... sonically, to fit the bass in. But that was their concept and I think that if Cliff had been there it might have been a bit different. But with the new member, I felt he didn't have as much to say. I think he was just happy to be there, at that moment. I think Jason just said, 'This is the way it is, let's roll with it'." He adds, "It's also the sound of the guitar. It takes up a lot of room in the sonic spectrum. But ultimately that was the decision of the band and the mixer."

Rasmussen makes the same point about the mix. "I know for a fact, since I recorded it, that there's brilliant bass playing on that album."

Like Clink, however, Flemming was not responsible for the mix. That task fell to the production team of Mike Thompson and Steven Barbiero, whose previous credits included Whitney Houston, Madonna, the Rolling Stones, Prince, Cinderella, Tesla – and Guns N' Roses' *Appetite For Destruction*.

Mixing took place during May 1988, at Bearsville Studios in Woodstock, where James and Lars sat perched over Thompson and Barbiero's shoulders. Interviewed at the time by *Music & Sound Output* magazine, Lars' and James' comments certainly back up Clink's and Rasmussen's claims that they – and not the producers – were the real architects behind the sound on *Justice*.

Asked how it differed from *Master*, Hetfield said: "Drier… Everything's way up front and there's not a lot of 'verb or echo. We really went out of our way to make sure that what we put on the tape was what we wanted, so the mixing procedure would be as easy as possible."

Both men complained they didn't want it to be like *Ride The Lightning* where "Flemming was in a reverb daze." More tellingly, asked what they had learned from the "upfront and raw" sound of the *Garage Days EP*, Lars specifically mentioned "that mix," with James elaborating: "We learned that the bass is too loud."

"And when is the bass too loud?" Lars chirped in.

"When you can hear it!" they answered together, laughing.

Whatever the truth, by the time mixing had begun in Woodstock, Metallica was already back out on the road, on the US version of the Monsters of Rock festival: 25 dates at the biggest outdoor stadia in America, performing to upwards of 90,000 people a night; fourth on the bill below headliners Van Halen, the Scorpions and Dokken.

I travelled with the band for the opening two dates of the tour in Florida, at the Miami Orangebowl and the Tampa Stadium. "This has got to be the easiest trip we've ever done," Lars laughingly told me. You could see what he meant. Although Metallica was on in the middle of the afternoon, they were the hot 'breakout' band of the tour and audiences were uniformly ecstatic. With just a 40-minute set to perform, the band also had an unusual amount of free time to fill. "I've been drinking since I woke up this morning," James announced with a belch before they went onstage in Tampa, at the start of the tour.

There was now a small band of what they called their "tough tarts" at every show – girls waiting naked in the showers, girls in bikinis they'd given passes to the night before whose names they could no longer remember, girlfriends of boy fans offered to the band almost ritualistically.

"I couldn't figure out why all of a sudden I was handsome," said Kirk. "No one had ever treated me like that before in my life." Both Kirk and Lars were starting to use cocaine more regularly too. Lars primarily, he said, because "it gave me another couple of hours drinking", Kirk because it brought him out of his shell. And because he liked being out of his head, sitting there stoned gazing at horror movies, some on TV, some just playing out in front of him in real time in his hotel room.

GETTY IMAGES X2

The biggest drinker was still James, who would regularly polish off half a bottle of 70-proof Jägermeister. He was also into the vodka, though his brand had improved: he now favoured Absolut. "That whole tour was a big fog for me," James later recalled. "It was bad coming back to some of those towns later, because there were a lot of dads and moms and husbands and boyfriends looking for me. Not good. People were hating me and I didn't know why..."

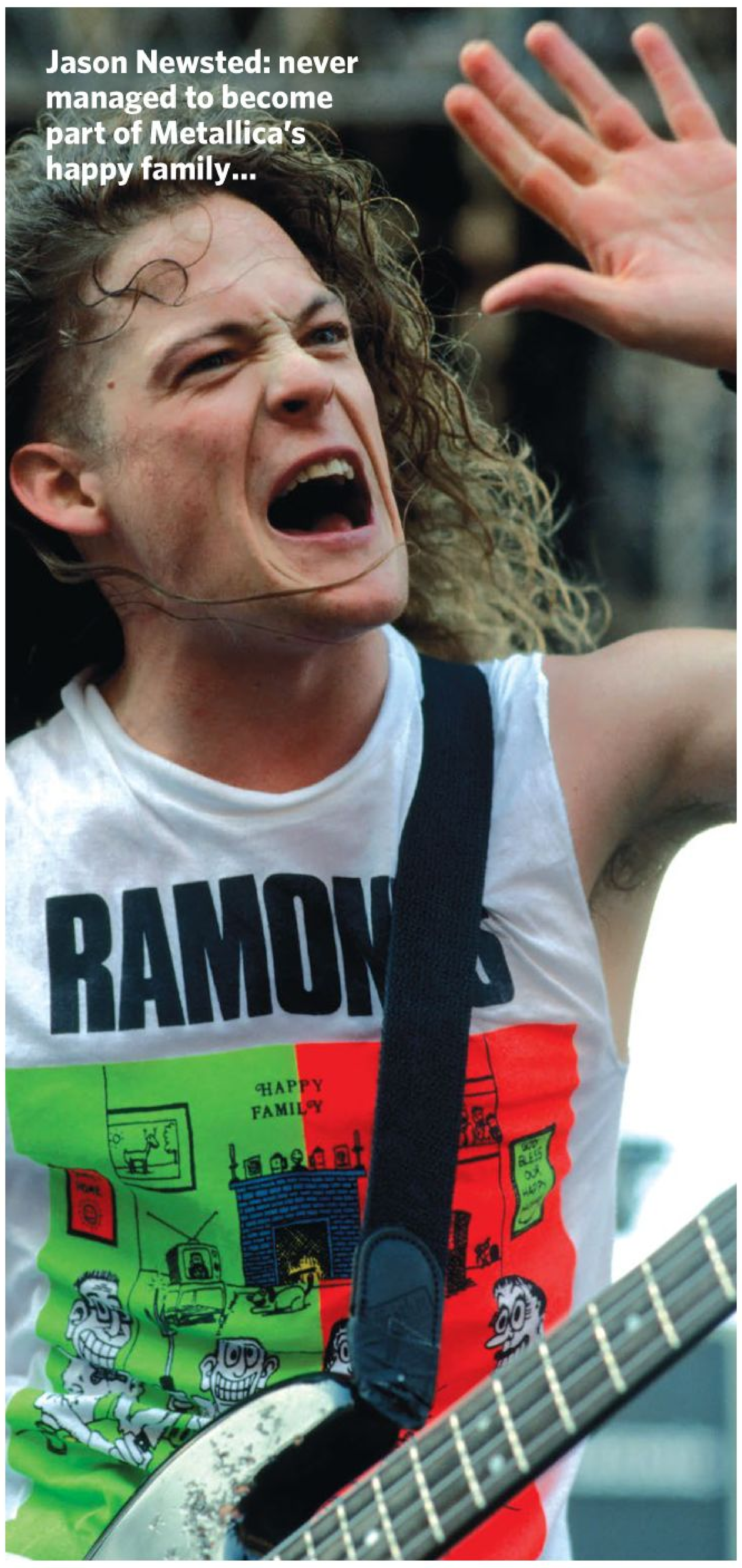
He admitted that it wasn't funny though when he got so drunk he became violent. "There'd be the happy stage. Then it would get ugly where the world is fucked and fuck you. I became... the clown, then the punk anarchist after that, wanting to smash everything and hurt people. I'd get into fights – sometimes with Lars. That's how resentments would get released, pushing and shoving, throwing things at him... He wants to be the centre of attention all the time and that bothers me because I'm the same way. He's out there charming people, and I'll be intimidating so people will respect me that way."

Meanwhile, the band's reputation continued to grow with every appearance they made on the tour. When it became known that the Metallica T-shirt was selling more than any other bar the official event Tee, even headliners Van Halen began to take notice, singer Sammy Hagar making a big deal of coming over and spending "face time" with them both nights I was there.

...A*nd Justice for All* was finally released on 5 September, just as *Master Of Puppets* was officially certified platinum. *Master* had taken 18 months to sell its first million copies in America – *Justice* would take just nine weeks, peaking at No. 6, their highest US chart position yet. Reviews were uniformly positive in Britain where the album hit No. 4. At record company level, though, there were serious concerns. Dave Thorne, the band's A&R man at Phonogram, spent his time defending it to "large numbers of opinionated people in the record company [who] were coming knocking on my door going, 'This record sounds shit, what's the matter with it?'"

Nevertheless, the British and European legs of the Damaged Justice tour, as it was named, were a sell-out. The tour reached Britain in October, where they sold-out three nights at the Hammersmith Odeon. The big surprise of the tour was the band's new stage show, their first attempt at anything elaborate, featuring a 20-foot replica of the album sleeve's blindfolded and bound Statue of Liberty – nicknamed Edna after Iron Maiden's Eddie – which collapsed melodramatically at the endless climax to *...And Justice For All* each night, its head falling off as if guillotined.

This was the era of the heavy metal pantomime as acceptable stage spectacle – led by Maiden's ubiquitous Eddie figure, now brought to life for the encores each night, and Dio's even sillier dragon (nicknamed Denzel) which singer Ronnie James Dio would 'do battle' with onstage – and in this context Edna's plummet to disgrace every night was almost dignified by comparison. Nevertheless, it could have its comic, *Spinal Tap* moments too, like the nights when the statue simply refused to collapse or just its head would roll off the stage into the audience, or half an arm would fall off, swaying gently before toppling onto the drum riser.



Jason Newsted: never managed to become part of Metallica's happy family...

What really put the album over the top, though, was the success of *One* when it was released as a single in February 1989.

Filmed in a disused warehouse in Long Beach the video for *One* was a stunningly accomplished piece of work. Built around actual footage from the movie version of *Johnny's Got A Gun*, starring Jason Robards, intercut with stark, strobe-lit shots of the band performing the song, the *One* video would do for Metallica what none of their records or live performances, with or without Cliff, had yet been able to: both enhance their reputation as musical innovators and reposition the band centrally as mainstream rock stars.

The full, unedited video was nearly eight minutes long. Like the single, however, it was also made available to TV in edited form, minus the film footage, with a fade on the final couple of minutes of music. Even then it was so at odds with prevailing trends in Eighties' rock video, one MTV executive told their co-manager Cliff Burnstein the only place *One* would be seen was on the news. In fact, the full *One* video was premiered on MTV on the night of 22 January, 1989, on that week's edition of *Headbanger's Ball*. It instantly became the No.1 most requested video on MTV.

By February, *One* had became the first Metallica single to reach the US Top 40, peaking at No. 35; while in the UK it reached No. 13. *One* also achieved another landmark for Metallica when it attracted the attention of that year's Grammy academicians, the band becoming shortlisted for the newly created award: Best Hard Rock / Metal Performance Vocal or Instrumental.

"*One* proved to us that things we thought of as evil aren't as evil as we thought," said Lars, "as long as we do it our way." The Grammys show took place at the Shrine Auditorium in LA on 22 February, where the band was invited to perform their much-discussed new song. It was a momentous occasion, the first time an unashamedly 'heavy metal' band had actually played live at the Grammys – even though it was the truncated, five-minute version of the song.

Shrouded in shadows, colours muted so that they looked almost black-and-white, it was a stupendous performance from a band that Kirk later admitted was "very nervous" playing for all the suits and ties. "We were like diplomats or representatives for this genre of music." There was a sense of outrage, however, when the band missed out on the award itself, that honour inexplicably going to Jethro Tull for their Crest of a Knave album – a decision so unexpected that none of Jethro Tull was there to accept it.

Metallica put a brave face on it, like the whole thing was beneath them – they even suggested adding a sticker to the *Justice* album with the words: Grammy Award Losers. But privately Lars was seething. "Let's face it, they really fucked up," he told me. "Jethro Tull best heavy metal band? I mean, fucking come on!"

I caught up with the band again during their five-date tour of Japan in May, where I saw them play two shows at the Yoyogi Olympic Pool arena in Tokyo. They had been on the road for the best part of a year by that point but apart from James' stomach problems, which he appeared to be trying to alleviate by downing as much Sapporo beer and hot flasks of sake as he could, they seemed to be holding up well and in generally good spirits. Money had come in and they no longer lived together as one, but they still went out together as a gang – when they were on the road at least.

Late at night they went to the Lexington Queen, a well-known hangout for rock bands since the days of Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple, where it was said you could get a free drink just by mentioning guitarist Ritchie Blackmore's name.

I sat with the band having a meal, and listened as they talked about the new houses they had all recently purchased, or were in the process of procuring, on the solid advice of their accountants, ready for their return home as millionaires for the first time later that year.

They were still new enough to wealth though to feign indifference, Lars protesting that he still drove around in "a piece of shit Honda"; James in a truck. Yet all I saw them in were limos and the private jet they travelled in while on tour in America – the same one previously used by Bon Jovi and before that Def Leppard. "We put some money back into how we travel while we're on the road," said Lars, "because we're out there a long time and it just makes the whole thing easier."

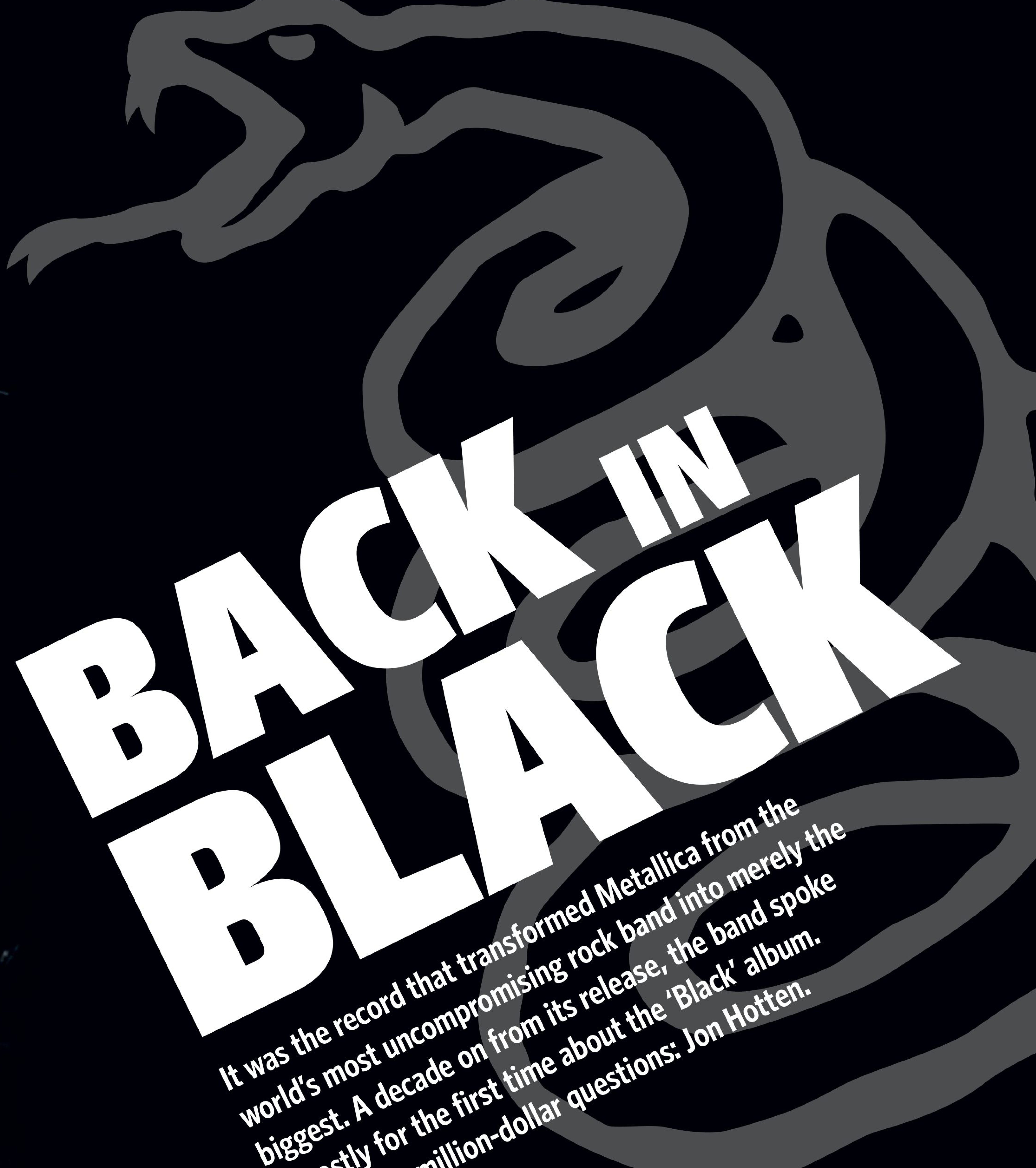
The more he went on though, the more the others sniggered and made faces. "How about that house you just bought?" teased Kirk. "Where is it, like on a mountain?"

Lars looked at him, like shut the fuck up. It turned out the house he'd bought was situated so high on a hill he was considering having an elevator built just so people could get to his front door.

"Do it," I said, "If you can afford it why the hell not?"

"Yeah," he said, "You're right. I will..."

And he did.



BACK IN BLACK

It was the record that transformed Metallica from the world's most uncompromising rock band into merely the biggest. A decade on from its release, the band spoke honestly for the first time about the 'Black' album. Asking the million-dollar questions: Jon Hotten.

GETTY IMAGES

"Waddya mean I'll have to re-learn to play drums?!" But for the 'Black' album Lars spent weeks doing just that.

It's some time in 1988, almost midnight UK time, and Metallica drummer Lars Ulrich is on the phone from San Francisco. It's his first appointment of the day in promoting Metallica's new album, *And Justice For All*. But there's a problem with that famously voluble Danish mouth. In fact I can barely make out what he's saying.

"Man, I've got terrible toothache…" Lars mumbles.

"You what?"

"No joke, I've got to get to a dentist. I'll call you back."

Yeah, right.

Except he does. Two hours later, with me slumped red-eyed by the phone, Lars rings back.

"Hey, it's Lars…"

Except it sounded more like, "Hey, id Lards…" A Frisco mouth mechanic had slammed in some novocaine, drilled a few holes and sent him home with a gobful of blood and cotton wool. And the first thing Lars does is… ring back to talk about his new album.

The point being that Lars Ulrich is a singularly determined man. He may not be – and certainly wasn't then – the greatest drummer ever to pick up sticks. He may not be the guy you'd choose to get trapped in a lift with. But if you need somebody for whole-hearted, one-eyed and over-arching devotion to the cause, then Lars Ulrich's your man. He is a giver of the fabled 110 per cent – bad teeth or no bad teeth.

The, frankly, uneven …*And Justice For All* record that Lars was so keen to talk about was a big record. Big enough for most bands to kill for. It reached No.6 on the US *Billboard* Hot 100 and sold more than six million copies worldwide. But despite the tangible signs of success – fast cars, flash houses – and the rhetoric of their interviews, Metallica knew that …*Justice*… was not really good enough at all.

"After listening to the …*Justice*… album it was pretty apparent that we needed some guidance," James Hetfield later admitted wryly. It was "obvious," he said, who'd produced the record. The guitar and drum parts were disastrously high in the mix. "I'm not knocking it. It was right at the time. But the drums are really loud and the guitars are really loud. That'll be me and Lars, then."

Metallica and their new management team at Q-Prime – Peter Mensch and Cliff Bernstein – realised that the inherent problem with …*Justice*… was that the band had attracted a wide new fanbase. If they presented them next with a record that replicated its nine-minute songs, its dusty sound, the law of diminishing returns would apply. If Metallica were to advance and go global they needed to shape up. Now.

ROSS HALFIN

After a nine-month break in 1989, Metallica played nine shows in Europe to knock off the rust. The last of those was in Glasgow. Backstage afterwards, Lars and James made plans to meet in San Francisco in two weeks to start work on the new album. Lars handed James a cassette they called *The Riff Tape*. *The Riff Tape* did exactly what it said on the box. It was a collection of riffs that James, guitarist Kirk Hammett and bassist Jason Newsted had made during the 240-odd nights of the *…Justice…* tour. Its contents would form the basis of Metallica's next studio album.

Two weeks later, James found himself making the 30-minute drive each day to Ulrich's house in San Francisco, where Lars had installed a little eight-track demo studio to the property cut into the side of one of the city's famous hills.

The first riff on *The Riff Tape* was one that Hammett had come up with. "I tried to write the heaviest thing I could think of," Hammett said later. "I was all fired up." He certainly was. The riff in question would become the basis of what remains the band's most famous song, *Enter Sandman*.

Lars and James worked until they had seven songs in rough demo form. Some, like Hammett's riff, had neither lyrics nor a title, some had titles, some had titles and the odd lyric. Hetfield would improvise vocal melodies by mixing snatches of song titles and ideas with 'Ooooh's and 'Wooaaah's.

"The way it works," Lars explained, "is James and I sit with a big list of song titles and throw them at each other. We might pick one that will work with a specific guitar part. Others that don't catch straight away we just leave on the list."

With the songs on the tape demoed, things were about to change more radically.

"We're Metallica. No one produces us; no one fucks with our shit and tells us what to do."

Lars Ulrich

"They had to make an out-of-the-box decision on how to make the next record," said Cliff Bernstein, reiterating Q-Prime's belief that Metallica simply had to go big with this one. "They had been used to doing things a certain way."

"We'd never really liked the mixing on *…Justice, Master Of Puppets* or *Ride The Lightning*," Ulrich said at the time. "So we were thinking: 'Who can we get in to do the mixing?' We felt it was time to make a record with a huge, big, fat low end. And the best-sounding record like that in the last couple of years was [Mötley Crüe's] *Dr Feelgood*. So we told our manager: 'Call this guy and see if he wants to mix the record.'"

'THIS GUY' WAS BOB ROCK, A FORMER SMALL-TIME musician who had since hit it big as a producer. His speciality was rambunctious pop-rock which sounded fantastic pumping from a car radio. He'd turned the trick for Bon Jovi and Aerosmith, and had made Mötley Crüe sound like the world's greatest bar band. Rock was a fastidious perfectionist whose ear for music was a lot more finely tuned than some of his work suggested.

He was close friends with Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora. While Bon Jovi were on a sabbatical, Sambora had approached him with a view to producing a solo album he had written. Rock was loathe to let a friend down, but he was intrigued by the Metallica proposal.

He'd booked a vacation with his family, and took off on a driving tour of the Grand Canyon still torn between the two projects. As he drove along he came across a Native American kid by the side of the road, miles from anywhere. Rock was amazed to see that he was wearing a Metallica T-shirt. Later he pulled into a desert filling station; a Metallica tune was on the radio. "Metallica were never on the radio," he recalled. "These were like signs I couldn't ignore."

BOTTOM: BERNHARD KUHMSTEDT / RETNA

ROSS HALFIN

Above: Lars, Bob Rock and James in a rare moment of joviality during their months of "hell" holed up together in the studio.

Below: Kirk Hammett, the man who wrote the riff that was the basis of *Enter Sandman*.

Rock got back to Q-Prime and said that he wasn't interested in mixing the Metallica album. He wanted to produce it.

"Of course, we said: 'We're Metallica. No one produces us; no one fucks with our shit and tells us what to do,'" noted Lars. "But slowly, over the next few days, we thought maybe we should let our guard down and at least talk to the guy. Like, if his name really is Bob Rock, how bad can he be?"

James and Lars flew to Canada to meet with Bob Rock at his home in Vancouver. Lars: "We're sitting there saying: 'Well, Bob, we think that we've made some good albums, but this is three years later and we want to make a record that is really bouncy, really lively, just has a lot of groove to it.'

"We told him that live we have this great vibe, and that's what we wanted to do in the studio. He was brutally honest with us. He said he'd seen us play a bunch of times and, 'you guys have not captured what's live on record yet.' We're like: 'Excuse me? Who the fuck are you?'

"But he basically said the same thing as we had," Ulrich rationalised, "and from then on we thought that maybe we shouldn't be so stubborn, and maybe see where the fuck this would bring us."

Hetfield and Ulrich's reactions to Rock pretty much reflected how the big wide world saw their union, too. "Some people thought Bob would make us sound too commercial," said Hetfield. "You know: 'Oh, Bob works with Bon Jovi, Bob works with Mötley Crüe.' But if Flemming Rasmussen [Metallica's producer to that point] worked on a Bon Jovi record, would Bon Jovi all of a sudden sound like Metallica? We chose Bob because we were really impressed with his crisp, full-sounding production on The Cult's *Sonic Temple* album and on Mötley Crüe's *Dr. Feelgood*.

"We wanted to create a different record and offer something new to our audience," Kirk Hammett agreed, once the decision was announced. "A lot of bands put out the same record three or four times, and we didn't want to fall into that rut.

"The truth is, in the past we may have been guilty of putting out the same running order – you know, start out with a fast song, then the title track, then a ballad. Other than that, though, we've really tried to create something different every time. And on *Metallica* we definitely made a conscious effort to alter and expand the band's basic elements." ➽

"I don't think we need to justify ourselves at all. We're doing our shit our way."

James Hetfield

Bob Rock liked to work in his native Vancouver. In fact he had never worked anywhere else. When you're Bob Rock, they come to you. Metallica didn't. "We really didn't want to do it in Vancouver," said Ulrich, "and he'd never made a record outside of Vancouver; everyone comes to him. For a while I didn't think it was going to work out."

They compromised on One On One studios, a fine, unflashy complex in North Hollywood, West Hollywood's ugly cousin. Settling in for the duration, Metallica and Rock tried to make it home, sprucing it up with all the usual time-killing junk: pool tables, girlie mags, basketball hoops, pinball, punchbags – "for fucking tension," said Ulrich.

He needed it, too. For Bob Rock and Metallica, One On One was a torture chamber, pure and simple. Like a golf coach rebuilding a pupil's swing, Rock set to work on Metallica. He began by having the band play the songs through together, creating a groove and a feel. The method ran directly opposite to Metallica's usual working practices. "The whole first three months of pre-production were very difficult. They were suspicious," noted Rock.

Lars suffered the most. The new groove and feel had to originate from him. As a drummer, he had built his technique around complex fills and flourishes, embellishing already long and involved tunes.

"I used to be really concerned with the timing and lengths of a song when we were writing them. But this time I didn't even want to think about it. Before, it was always about not fucking up; it was never about letting the music carry you someplace. I think we spent a lot of years trying to prove to ourselves and to everyone out there that we can play our instruments – you know, listen to this big drum fill I'm doing."

Rock and Ulrich each wanted simplicity. Not for its own sake, but to highlight the purity and power of the songs that they were refining. Ulrich, though, had trained for years to produce the exact opposite.

The band shot some home-video footage of the early months in pre-production. Some of it features Lars, fingers taped up, sweat sticking his hair to his face, losing his rag as Rock pushes him through innumerable rehearsals, countless takes. Lars had to re-learn a lot of technique as he adapted his style to the requirements of the sessions. Even when he had nailed the essential purity that he and Rock were searching for, the perfectionist producer was still insisting of upwards of 40 takes for every song.

At the same time, Rock was fighting the band's reluctance to relinquish all their past habits – and also their natural tendencies to bait him, to test his worth.

In interviews for the *Classic Album* DVD series, Lars noted: "In retrospect, the nine months we spent in this room were pure hell. We were just really reluctant. The door was open just enough for Bob to open it more and pull us through. It became about a vibe and a moment."

The die was cast, though. There would be no turning back. The alternative, as Lars knew, was not worth considering. Metallica must grow, or whither on the vine.

ROCK BEGAN BY MAKING SUGGESTIONS. HUNDREDS of them, some good, some mad. At first the band were inclined to blow them off, but slowly he began to make an impression on them. The first shift was really a mental leap, especially for Lars and James.

"Our reaction to his proposal was initially negative,"

The men in 'Black', Metallica Mk.III: (l to r) Jason Newsted, Lars Ulrich, James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett.

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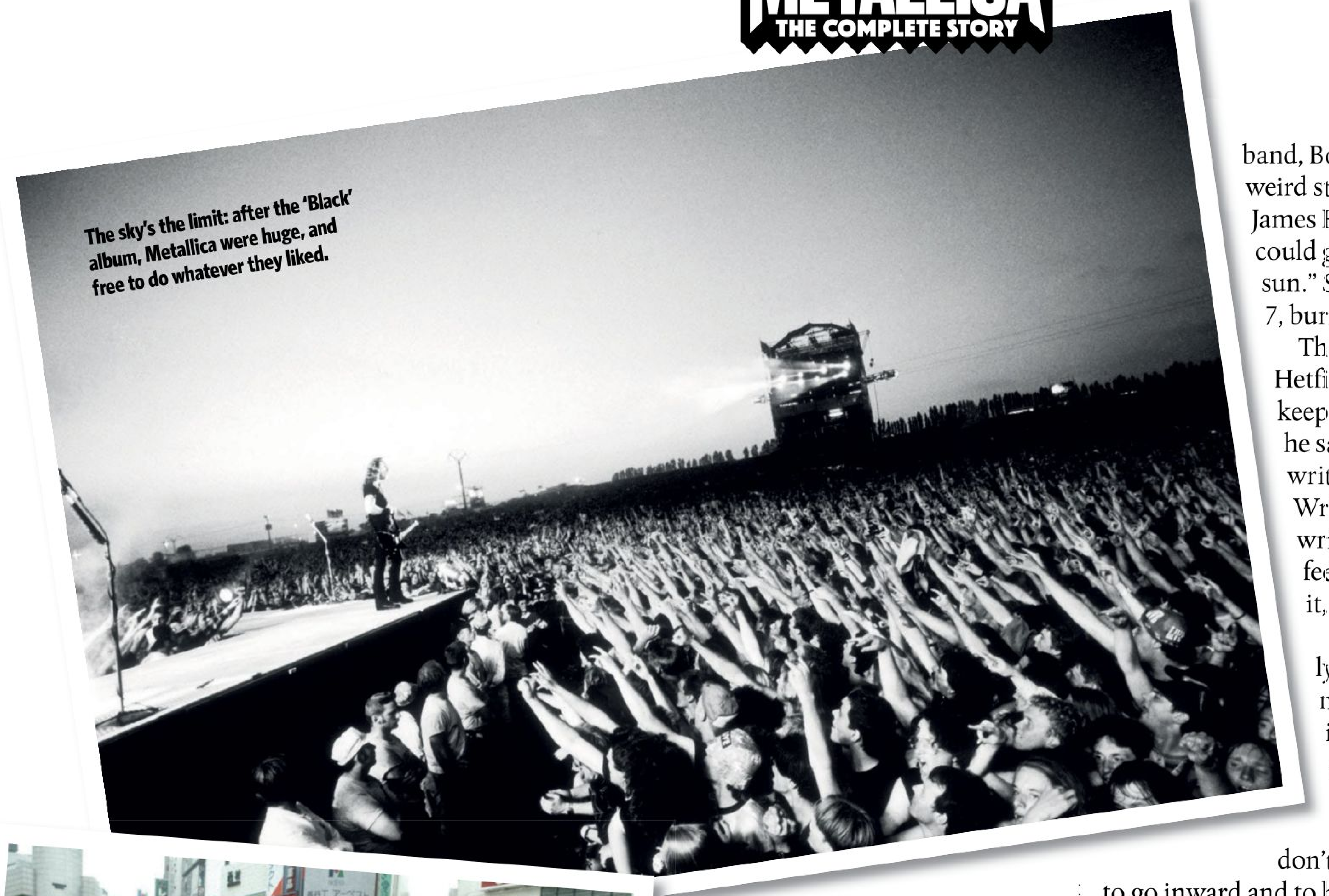


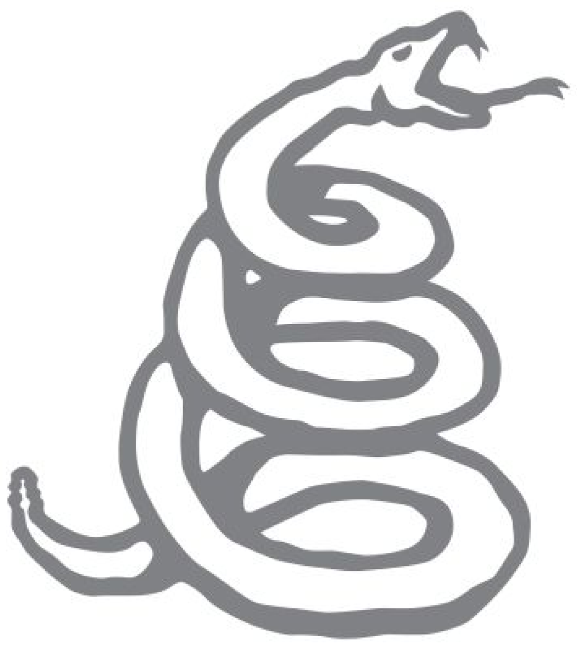
The sky's the limit: after the 'Black' album, Metallica were huge, and free to do whatever they liked.

Hetfield, Ulrich, Hammett and Newsted merge inconspicuously with the crowd in Japan.

confessed Lars. "But when the first few songs started to develop we realised that the shit we were doing was a little more open-minded. In the past our stubbornness had been one of our shortcomings, as well as one of the reasons for our success."

Lars also took heart from the songs they had written. Rock wasn't trying to impose anything that the band felt wholly alienated by, he was concerned more with showing them the boundaries of possibility.

"All 12 songs are ours," said Lars. "They were written before we went into pre-production, but Bob was



"I resented Bob Rock. We didn't speak for a year after that record was made. It was ugly, nasty."

Lars Ulrich

great at helping us build up the whole sound. Everybody put their ideas more on the table. Last time it was: 'This is my drum sound and fuck you!' Bob's forté was that he was able to drag good performances out of us, especially the vocals.

"In the past, certain things were sacred. We had the almighty Metallica guitar riff and nothing could mess with it. Bob would say: 'You've already played that riff 92 times. I think people have it in their heads now.' So he'd put shit on top of it to give it texture. And that's been foreign to us. The main idea was to keep an open mind when ideas were presented to us. A lot of great things on the record came from not saying no."

Hetfield, too, was unequivocal: "I don't think we need to justify ourselves at all. We're doing our shit our way. The integrity is there and we still get to see all our shit from start to finish. We've got the best people working for us now, people who respect our integrity, and if outside people supply us with good ideas for Metallica then why not listen to them?"

Along with the external pressures, the contradictory forces of wanting change but rejecting its methods, and all of the quirky personality clashes and coded alliances within the band, Bob Rock was dealing with some other weird stuff, too. Lars liked to work at night. James Hetfield preferred the daytime so that he could go outside, "take a few breaks, feel some sun." So Rock ended up there at all hours. "24-7, burning the midnight oil," says James.

The 'Black' album was, above all, to be Hetfield's album. "It just got a little too easy to keep writing lyrics like the …*Justice*…' shit," he said. "It's too easy to watch the news and write a fucking tune about what you saw. Writing shit from within is a lot harder than writing the political shit, but once it's out it feels a lot easier to put your weight behind it, especially live."

"When the song is great and you add a lyric that takes it to another level, there's no better feeling. There's a big satisfaction in that. But I don't know, it's a proud kind of feel: 'Here's my baby; look at my kid.'

"I'm not the kind of guy who'll sit down and read novels or poetry and I don't write nice little poems. The only way is to go inward and to be a little bit more universal, things that touch everyone."

James did, especially with songs like *Nothing Else Matters* and *Wherever I May Roam*, which were concerned with the brotherhood of the band on the road, and *The God That Failed*, a particularly personal song about his childhood. The soundscapes that the band and Rock were creating, though lush and broad, had the new simplicity that they'd been aiming for. "The simplicity of the songs left it wide open for the vocals to take over," said James. "For me that was a first."

Ten years on, Hetfield said of Rock: "I wouldn't be where I am today without his willingness to open my mind and push me further into different singing styles and moods."

Rock in turn appreciates the personal and artistic breakthrough Hetfield made: "There's a real human quality to the album. James took a huge leap. The album stands as a very personal album."

WITH ROCK NOW GETTING THE PERFORMANCES HE wanted from Metallica, they were beginning to grasp what was possible, and they were enjoying being pushed. It was becoming apparent that the 'Black' album would be something special. There was one more major breakthrough to come: Metallica would cut a ballad. Their first. It would be a big one. With a symphony orchestra.

James was on the phone to a friend one evening, and was messing around on his acoustic guitar at the same time. He hit on a little melody picked out on the bass strings, and hung up quickly when he realised what he was doing, "I had no intentions of it being a Metallica song, it was a personal song for me," James said. "I didn't even think they'd like it. It was just me writing for me."

The tune was called *Nothing Else Matters*. Lars Ulrich: "It was a song you couldn't put borders around. So when Bob suggested the orchestra, I was open to it."

With *Nothing Else Matters*, Metallica had transgressed every boundary they'd set for themselves, and every one set by the media and public expectation. They had proven that heavy, powerful music could come through more than one medium. They'd added a new dynamic to their music and opened their appeal beyond genre. They'd cracked it. It wasn't until they'd fleshed out the 12 tunes that they realised how far from their thrash roots they had progressed.

"I'm sure we're gonna get a lot of people saying we're selling out," said Lars," but I've heard that shit from *Ride The Lightning* on. People were already going: 'Boo, sell out' back then. One side of me wants to sit there and defend it – just cos they're short songs doesn't mean they're any more accessible – and the other side says I don't give a fuck."

Hetfield, for his part, never even considered the style of the music he was making: "I never had the big picture of this

ROSS HALFIN

album that Lars did. To me it was just a bunch of good songs."

What weighed on Hetfield, and on the rest of the band and Bob Rock, was the weight of time. They had been in the studio for nine months. Their skin was turning grey. They had cabin fever.

"We've seen four other bands come through and do their albums," said Hetfield, "and some of those guys have already gone on tour."

Rock remained utterly fastidious as the album neared completion. Everything was "big and weighty". He would spend five hours patching a perfectly pitched note into a Hammett solo. He would push Ulrich through 40 takes for "the magical verses and choruses", then cut them together "into one magical track."

"Seven months in the studio with Metallica tends to change a man. And Bob's been changed," laughed James. "He's got a few more grey hairs, a few more wrinkles, he grew a tumour, and has some sore knuckles from hitting the studio walls."

Final mixes were done in New York. *Enter Sandman* took 10 days. As time ground Rock, Ulrich and Hetfield down, *Holier Than Thou* was mixed in one last, desperate session. That was ironic. Lars and James had felt that *Holier Than Thou* would probably be the first single to be released from the record when they had completed the initial demos at Lars's eight-track home studio. By contrast, *Enter Sandman* didn't even have a name at that stage.

It was an example of the record's natural evolution. Rock had first described *Sad But True* as a "*Kashmir* for the 90s", yet it would be the grandeur of *Nothing Else Matters* and *The Unforgiven* that filled that role. In dispelling the public's preconceptions of what Metallica might achieve, they had dispelled their own as well.

Ten years on, Lars Ulrich speaks with a wonderful candour about the sessions that changed his life. "I resented Bob Rock," he said. "Me and Bob Rock didn't speak for, like, the first year after that record was made. It was ugly, nasty. I'd never made a record that took that long to make. Then something strange happened a year or two after that and we became friends. Now I can't imagine making an album without him."

The rest of the band understood, too. As did Bob Rock: "You just can't argue with the songs," he said.

Lars: "There were definitely a lot of planets aligning."

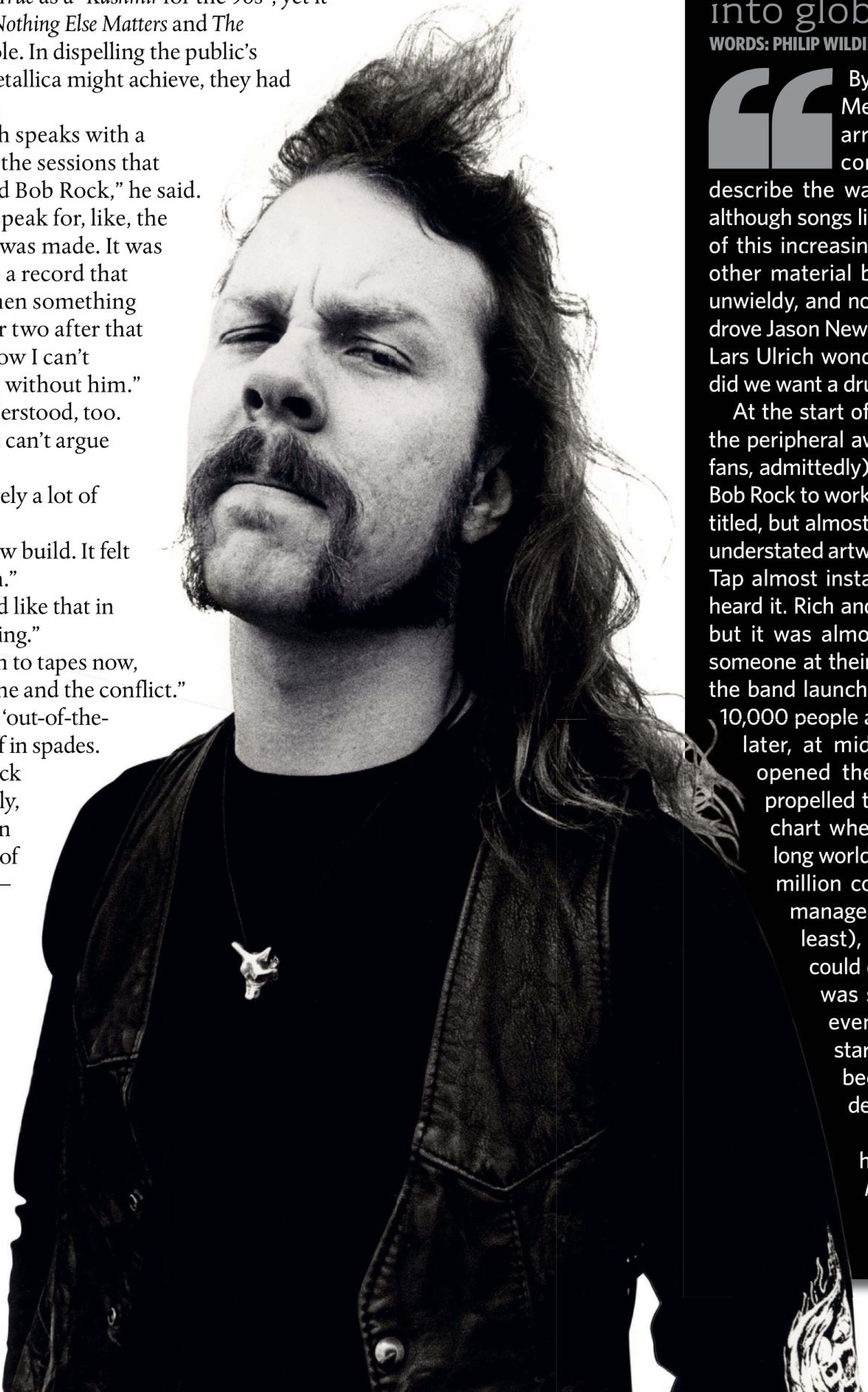
James: "It was a long, slow build. It felt good to get the recognition."

Lars: "To have one record like that in your career, it's truly amazing."

Bob Rock: "When I listen to tapes now, I hear the hours and the time and the conflict."

Metallica had made their 'out-of-the-box' decision, and it paid off in spades. They became the clichéd rock juggernaut, touring endlessly, building unstoppably. When they did call a halt a couple of years later, they were made – artistically, commercially and financially. Because of the 'Black' album, life for Metallica would never be the same again.

They could do what the hell they wanted. And so they did. They cut their hair, put on eyeliner (well, Hammett did), played gigs with a symphony orchestra, offered up a remix album… They were free.



BELOW: the 'Black' album was very much james Hetfield's album.

EVERY HOME SHOULD HAVE ONE

★ METALLICA

METALLICA

Making it nearly destroyed them, but it turned them into global superstars.

WORDS: PHILIP WILDING

"By the time of 1988's *...And Justice For All*, Metallica had taken their expansive, heavily arranged sound to an almost unnatural conclusion; 'convoluted' doesn't quite describe the way the band were now sounding. And although songs like *One* and *Harvester Of Sorrow* grew out of this increasingly sophisticated and creative regime, other material broke up on impact. It was dense and unwieldy, and not helped by a bone-dry production that drove Jason Newsted's bass all but out of the mix and had Lars Ulrich wondering out loud some years later: "Why did we want a drum sound like matchboxes being hit?"

At the start of the 90s, Metallica had all but stripped the peripheral away. They shocked fans (easily shocked fans, admittedly) by employing former Bon Jovi producer Bob Rock to work on what would be their fifth album. Self-titled, but almost inevitably dubbed the 'Black' album, it's understated artwork would draw comparisons with Spinal Tap almost instantly. That, of course, was until people heard it. Rich and brooding and dark it might have been, but it was almost always about the songs first. Even someone at their record company must have noticed as the band launched the album with a listening party for 10,000 people at Madison Square Garden. Several days later, at midnight, record stores across America opened their doors to an eager audience who propelled the album to the top of the US *Billboard* chart where it stayed for a month. A three-year long world tour later, and it had sold in excess of 15 million copies. It had the kind of shelf life that managed to sustain five singles (in the US, at least), and in *Nothing Else Matters* a song you could dance to with your girlfriend. The album was so enigmatic and dazzling that no one even felt betrayed when James Hetfield started crooning at them. On the contrary, it became a high point of a live set usually designed to bludgeon an audience.

Every great band takes the true artistic high ground once, and *Metallica* was the moment when Metallica found their footing."

MATRIN GODDACRE/STEVE DOUBLE: GETTY IMAGES

THRASH 'TIL DEATH?

In 1991 the thrash metal party came to an end. The culprits? Grunge, funk-metal and Metallica's fifth album. This is the story of how the *Black Album* killed thrash…

WORDS: JOEL MCIVER

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Best metal performance: Metallica receive Grammys in 1991

"I've outgrown that fucking lullaby!"

Damn, that line was powerful, barked out by Metallica's James Hetfield on *Dyer's Eve*, the final song on his band's 1988 album *…And Justice For All*. Signing off their amazing 1980s catalogue with this slab of warp-speed thrash metal, Metallica made it clear that when it came to musical aggression, few other bands could compete.

No wonder that come August 12, 1991, metalheads queued around the block at record stores in every city in the civilised world – and beyond – to snap up a copy of 'Tallica's fifth album, a self-titled behemoth with a none-more-black cover. This, we told ourselves, would be the ultimate thrash album, a record that would make *Master Of Puppets* sound tame. Grabbing an LP or cassette off the rack (or possibly a CD if we had the money), we ran home, slapped the thing on our dad's Sanyo hi-fi and waited for it to begin, as eager as a kid on Christmas morning.

Enter Sandman started. Not bad. Mid-tempo.

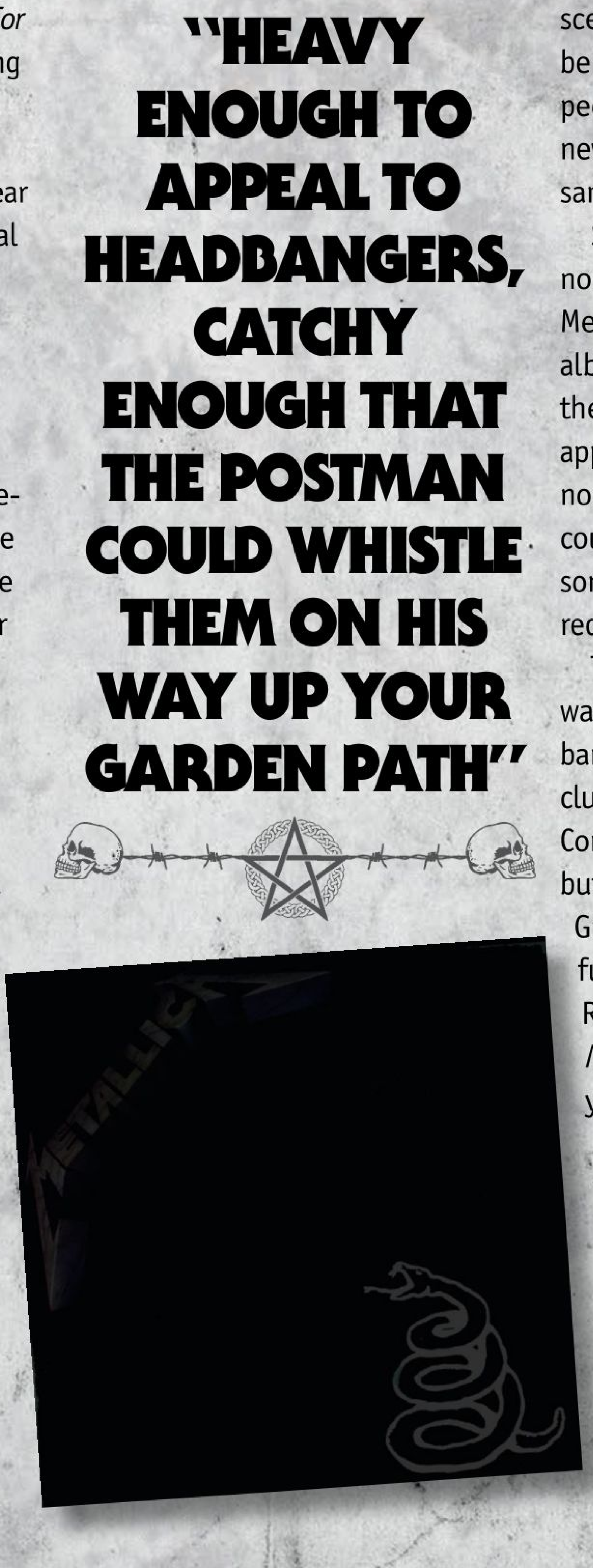
Sad But True began. Very good, we concluded. Heavy. Still mid-tempo, though.

Holier Than Thou was next. Fine, we reckoned. Kind of… mid-tempo.

It was like waiting for the punchline to a disappointing joke. As great as the *Black Album* undoubtedly was, the speedy, bug-eyed insanity of thrash was nowhere to be heard in any of its songs. Not even in *Through The Never,* which started promisingly before going all, you guessed it, mid-tempo.

Clearly, Metallica had done some more "outgrowing" when it came to thrash metal.

"HEAVY ENOUGH TO APPEAL TO HEADBANGERS, CATCHY ENOUGH THAT THE POSTMAN COULD WHISTLE THEM ON HIS WAY UP YOUR GARDEN PATH"



In retrospect, when thrash went into hibernation, it wasn't all Metallica's fault. Change was already in the air in the early 1990s. For at least five years before the *Black Album* appeared, glam and thrash had divided the metal scene pretty much equally, in America anyway: you could be on one side or the other, but not both, and perhaps people were sick of this state of affairs. It was time for new sounds to enter, and these arrived more or less at the same time as the *Black Album*. Within six weeks, in fact.

September 24, 1991 is as good a date as any to nominate as history's 'International Bye-Bye To Thrash Metal Day'. On that date, Nirvana released their second album *Nevermind* and the Red Hot Chili Peppers issued their fifth, *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*. Heavy enough to appeal to headbangers, melodic enough to attract non-metal fans and catchy enough that the postman could whistle them on his way up your garden path, the songs on these two game-changing records completely redefined the shape of heavy music.

The Chilis' clean-cut, funk-laden rock had been on its way for a while. In their early days, RHCP were a ferocious band, delivering amped-up, punk-influenced funk in LA clubs and crossing over to the metal scene with ease. Competitors with a similar sound, notably Faith No More but also lesser-knowns such as Living Colour, Infectious Grooves and 24-7 Spyz, had been assisting in the rise of funk-metal, but when the Chilis recruited über-producer Rick Rubin to tweak the faders on *Blood Sugar Sex Magik,* millions of new fans came their way faster than you could say, "Nice royalty cheques, Anthony".

And why not? The songs were great. They just weren't thrash.

Grunge, spearheaded by Nirvana but soon boosted by the arrival of Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Alice In Chains and Stone Temple Pilots, was a different phenomenon entirely. You could forget the slap bass and day-glo socks of the funk-metal bands.

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The angst years: Nirvana led the grunge invasion

With grunge, the focus was on introspection and emotional self-analysis, or "being a miserable bastard" as your big brother put it. The music was plenty heavy, mind, and any metalhead who has never moshed to the sound of Mudhoney, Tad, Hole or Melvins hasn't really lived. For the three-year period between the release of *Nevermind* and Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain's suicide in April 1994, grunge was all over MTV and the radio.

And why not? The songs were great too. They just weren't thrash!

It was a dark time for the thrash alliance, all right, but there were a few signs of life. Like a will-o'-the-wisp shining feebly in the dark forest of alternative rock, a few songs cropped up here and there that showed allegiance to the thrash template of old.

Take Pantera, for example. Although groove was clearly in the hearts of Phil Anselmo and his merry Texan men, their early influences included Megadeth and Slayer, and you could hear this in the songs *Rise* and *Fucking Hostile* from Pantera's classic 1992 album *Vulgar Display Of Power*. A couple of years later, Machine Head emerged with *Burn My Eyes*, also a groove-metal album but one with the occasional fast beat – specifically in the pulverising *Blood For Blood* – to quicken thrashers' pulse rates. Both bands continued in this direction into the mid-90s, with Pantera delivering the amazing *Strength Beyond Strength* on 1994's *Far Beyond Driven* and Machine Head thrashing it up on *Struck A Nerve* on *The More Things Change*… three years later.

Sadly, these songs were few and far between. The *Black Album* had been so huge that the songwriters in pretty much every other thrash metal band around decided to try and bite off a chunk of Metallica's mainstream success for themselves. Megadeth, Testament and Anthrax all slowed their song tempos right down, leaving old-school fans feeling betrayed. The sole exception, certainly among bands operating at any significant commercial level, was Slayer, who deserve enormous recognition for one simple thing: they didn't slow their songs down. Their 1994 album *Divine Intervention* may have sounded a bit wonky thanks to the various producers who tinkered with it, but the songs were brutal, evil and above all fast.

The general tendency, though, was for the thrash metal bands of yore to attempt a radio-friendly direction or, failing that, to simply split up. Exodus, Forbidden, Vio-Lence, Flotsam And Jetsam, Sodom, Dark Angel, Destruction, Nuclear Assault, Onslaught, Death Angel and a bunch of other bands either vanished or were reduced to a shadow of their former selves. Kreator went goth. Sepultura went groove. Thrash metal was, to put it bluntly, yesterday's news.

The bigger picture, now that we're looking back at this era with the benefit of 20 years' hindsight, is that heavy metal was simply repositioning itself.

Funky monkeys: Red Hot Chili Peppers

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MICK HUTSON

The nu breed: Deftones shook up the scene once again

Clowning around: the masked men of Slipknot changed everything in 1999

Traumatic as it felt, thrash metal was not going anywhere: it just downsized for a while, replaced by other forms of heavy music. By 1994, Korn had arrived with their downtuned groove sound. Chugging, solid riffs replaced fast crunchy ones and nu metal was born.

Korn went multi-platinum while thrash fans sulked. Coal Chamber followed. Deftones arrived. Limp Bizkit emerged. When Slipknot smashed their way into the charts in 1999, the war of nu metal versus thrash was so definitively decided in favour of the overalls and masks that the very word 'thrash' seemed laughably old-hat.

Deprived of their thrills, thrash fans voted with their feet and went elsewhere. If no one from a thrash metal band was going to give us the adrenaline rush we craved, and no nu metal band could supply, we'd look deeper…

Death metal had taken hold in the early 1990s while MTV's attention was focused on Nirvana. Although the death metal scene had been bubbling under the surface since the late 80s, by 1992 new bands from Florida such as Obituary, Deicide and Morbid Angel were on the rise, while their New York State counterparts Cannibal Corpse, Immolation and Malevolent Creation were making an international mark. In the UK, Napalm Death and Carcass were developing a death metal and grindcore combination to cult acclaim; in Sweden, gritty, adrenalised death metal was emerging from Entombed, Grave, Carnage and Dismember. A melodic offshoot evolved in Gothenburg, featuring At The Gates, Dark Tranquility and other musically accomplished acts. Indebted to the thrash metal pioneers of the previous decade, these bands resolved to take the old style and make it heavier, faster and much more aggressive.

"WHEN SLIPKNOT SMASHED THEIR WAY INTO THE CHARTS IN 1999, THE WAR OF NU METAL VERSUS THRASH METAL WAS DEFINITIVELY DECIDED IN FAVOUR OF THE OVERALLS AND MASKS"

The same was true of black metal. Although Venom, Bathory, Mercyful Fate and Celtic Frost had made an impact in the mid-80s, their Satanic posturing was rendered obsolete almost overnight by a new wave of devilry which emerged from Norway and Sweden in the early 90s. You know the names: Mayhem, Immortal, Burzum, Darkthrone, Emperor, Satyricon, Dimmu Borgir. Helped along by a sequence of intra-scene murders and the media attention they received, the Norwegians spent the rest of the decade expanding into startling musical territory and reshaping everyone's ideas of good old devil worship. We Brits helped out by adding Cradle Of Filth into the mix, too.

The new death and black metal bands made music that demanded your attention, and repaid you with the rush of excitement that the best old-school thrash metal bands had given you. This also applied to the Californian stoner rock and British doom metal scenes. Although Kyuss, Monster Magnet, Cathedral and Paradise Lost played slow, the heaviness of their songs couldn't be denied, all of which meant that thrashers in search of thrills had plenty of options as the decade wore on.

Fortunately, times changed and a new thrash metal scene made its presence known by the end of the 90s. The Haunted, a Swedish act formed by members of At The Gates, were first up. In the States, Exodus and Testament returned to their old, tougher sound, as did Kreator and Sodom in Europe. Reformation fever gripped California's Bay Area, with Forbidden and Death Angel back in business. Slayer had never gone away, although they had flirted with nu metal on 1998's *Diabolus In Musica*, and by the new century even Megadeth and Anthrax had come back some of the way to the old, mosh-friendly style.

Finally, the rogues who caused all the trouble – Metallica – proved their allegiance to the original music with *Death Magnetic* in 2008. Sure, the album was no *Ride The Lightning*, but it was faster, more technical and more dynamic than the *Black Album*. And that, friends, represents progress. See you in the pit!

CLASSIC ROCK

★★★★ PRESENTS ★★★★

1992 TOUR SMACKDOWN!

GET IN THE RING

★★ Words: **Johnny Black** Portraits: **Mick Hutson** ★★

HEAD TO HEAD

"METALLICA DO A LOT OF BITCHING..."

"AXL ROSE? AXL 'POSE'!"

BATTLE OF THE HEAVYWEIGHTS

GUNS N' ROSES VS METALLICA

★ **THE EGOS! THE EXPLOSIONS! THE CRUSHED EYEBALLS! THE INSIDE STORY OF ROCK'S ULTIMATE TOUR** ★

When Metallica and Guns N' Roses announced that they would be hitting the road together in the summer of 1992, on paper it looked like the ultimate rock'n'roll dream time. But it didn't take long for the apparent bromance between two of the world's biggest bands to fall apart. The whole three-ring circus was plagued with scorched flesh, riots in the streets and the thunderous clash of massive egos, as the thrash metal titans fought to prove themselves superior to their Hollywood rivals, and Axl Rose's supremely self-absorbed arrogance crushed everything in front of it. The tour became a pressure cooker whose lid was sure to blow. The only questions were where and when…

Slash: in the ring when GN'R 'circus' hits town.

May 12, 1992. Lars Ulrich of Metallica and Slash of Guns N' Roses hold a press conference in Los Angeles to announce a joint co-headlining tour between the two bands, set to begin in July.

James Hetfield (guitar/vocals, Metallica): Here's the battle: heads-down heavy metal versus LA pomp and pumped-up hair. That's what it was. Bling versus dirt.

Hetfield was initially a big fan of Guns N' Roses, until this tour took its toll

Axl Rose: We wanted to do a tour with Metallica since the day we started. We worked real hard to put this thing together. We paid them a few million dollars more than they deserved because they wouldn't do it unless they got paid a certain amount. Okay. And the only way we could get 'em to do it was if we called it 'co-headlining'. So, fine, we call it 'co-headlining'. But when the shit all went down, the motherfuckers couldn't live with it.

James Hetfield: It was pretty difficult getting the 50/50 thing together, agreeing on a stage, times, where we're playing. There was a lot of shit that had to go back and forth.

Lars Ulrich (drummer, Metallica): If it was left to the managers, agents and accountants, this would never have got off the ground. Whenever we had a stumbling block, we'd all sit down and work it out.

James Hetfield: Me and Lars went out with Slash and Axl, had a little dinner and had a little talk, sorting it out. We had two different ideas, it turned out. We wanted to just go out and fucking play, but they wanted this Lollapalooza thing.

Lars Ulrich: We probably got to a point where we were being too petty about every detail but, to make it work, the shirts and the passes and whatever all had separate Metallica and Guns versions, with each on the left or on the top. If that's the kind of stuff it takes to get the tour off the ground…

ROSS HALFIN; GETTY

> **"It was heavy metal versus pumped-up hair. Bling versus dirt."**
> JAMES HETFIELD

July 17. The tour begins at RFK Stadium in Washington DC, USA, with Faith No More as the opening band.

Wendy Laister (publicist, Guns N' Roses): We had a big film crew with us, and a chiropractor and assistants, a masseuse, party planners, even Axl's psychic had two helpers. We had an awful lot of people on the road.

Jeanne Marie Laskas (writing in *Life* magazine): The crew accompanying Guns N' Roses is made up of about 80 people, including four bodyguards hired, in part, to keep the drug pushers and sex-crazed fans out of temptation's path. They've formed a family. For some of these people it is the only family they have every really known.

Axl Rose: I've never been in a position before where I've been responsible for the income and livelihood of at least 60 people, like our road crew and such. That's hard for me to deal with.

Wendy Laister (publicist): Guns N' Roses was like a big family on the road, but there were a huge number of problems. It didn't matter where we were, there was always drama. But that kept it very interesting from my point of view. I liked them very much as people, and the shows were extraordinary but also very inconsistent. They were mostly great, but not always, and you never knew what was coming.

Metallica's Lars Ulrich: "Oh-oh, here come the riots every night!"

Bruce Britt (reviewing in the *Los Angeles Daily News*): Guns N' Roses took more than 90 minutes to set up, which was more than enough time for the restless throng of concertgoers to make mischief. But not everyone was amused by the debauchery or Guns N' Roses' tardiness. Some fans had to leave the stadium early. Those who could stay were treated to the usual uneven Guns N' Roses set. The momentum was severely diminished by lengthy and pointless solos by guitarists Slash and Gilby Clarke, as well as drummer Matt Sorum. The band never regained its footing and the crowd slowly thinned. Some of the remaining fans were spied sleeping or just sitting, bored expressions on their faces. Unlike Guns N' Roses, Metallica seems fully aware that this tour presents a marvellous opportunity. In a performance that could only be compared to Attila The Hun's tour of Mongolia, Metallica storm-trooped its way into the hearts of the crowd. Their set was simply superb – more than 90 minutes of non-stop musical mayhem.

> **"I've had muscle therapy and acupuncture almost every day."**
> AXL ROSE

July 18. Giants Stadium, New Jersey. Axl apologises to the crowd for technical difficulties that resulted in GN'R starting late.

Slash: We've put our audiences through a lot of shit, but it's not that we don't care. Each show is a completely different trip for us, depending on our mental state. We try to approach each one as a unique event – almost like it was our last show. It's hard to regulate something like that. It's hard to say that it will start exactly at 9pm.

James Hetfield: We're out there grabbing some of their fans by the throat and going, "Wake up, you motherfuckers. This ain't no fantasy shit, no rock'n'roll fucking dream." Basically, if you wanna hang together, you can. I haven't even seen those guys yet.

July 21. Pontiac Silverdome, Pontiac, Michigan. At the end of You Could Be Mine, Axl Rose throws up and leaves the stage. Immediately, he regrets the poor performance, and the band play the song in full again.

Jeanne Marie Laskas (writing in *Life* magazine): Duff is having a hard time with life on the road. He is, frankly, getting sick and tired of fans who come up to him and, rather than fall all over him, ask: "Where's Axl?" Duffs wife, Linda, recently got him a T-shirt that reads: 'No, I don't know where Axl is!'

John L Reese (tour manager, Guns N' Roses): Shenanigans from our camp would seem to cause issues with Metallica… the late times going on stage from Guns N' Roses. If you pushed Axl, he would make the wait longer. They paid the overtime and played the shows.

James Hetfield: Axl's probably had quite a few things happen to him…

Axl Rose: As a child I was beaten a lot. People can't handle a troubled child who doesn't know how to accept help.

James Hetfield: …but he's really a spoilt personality. I don't really have time to figure him out, but he's a psychiatrist's fucking dream.

Axl Rose: I'm fighting for my own mental health, survival and peace. I'm doing a lot of self-help work and, fortunately, I can afford the people I work with. People say that I'm just spoiled. Yeah, I am. But the work I'm doing is so I can do my job… I've had work done on me – muscle therapy, kinesiology, acupuncture – almost every day that we've been on the road.

James Hetfield: It's not the band, Guns N' Roses, it's Axl, one guy, with all these other little guys hanging around him.

Jul y25. Rich Stadium, Orchard Park, Buffalo, New York State.

Jeanne Marie Laskas: Patricia Zera, 20, gets hit. A piece of glass? Ice?

ROSS HALFIN: RETNA

It lands right in her eye. Blood shoots out in weird spurts, so much of it that you can no longer see her eyeball. Her sister, Melinda, screams in terror. Her brother, Richard, believes that her eyeball has fallen out. Patricia is in shock. This isn't fair! She's not even a Metallica fan. She's come here to see Guns N' Roses. She spent months begging her mom to let her come to this concert. "Oh, my God, my mom!" she cries as she gets carted off to Mercy Hospital.

Patricia Zera's eyeball does not, by the way, turn out to be missing. Thirteen stitches above her eye put her back in shape. She returns to the concert, but the concert is over. Someone in the GN'R entourage hears her story and invites her to the band's private backstage party, a sixties bash with lava lamps and daisies on all the tables and slogans on the walls: 'Acid is groovy', 'Kill the pigs'. Patricia is introduced to all the guys in the band – Gilby, Duff, Matt, Dizzy, Slash – except Axl, who is sitting in the hot tub entertaining other guests.

Hairy moment: Axl went ballistic when Duff affectionately patted him on the head.

July 26: Three Rivers Stadium, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

James Hetfield: On that tour Lars was very open to the LA scene. He'll get obsessed with somebody and want to learn everything about them – that's putting it nicely. Following Axl around was kind of his thing.

Dizzy Reed (keyboards, Guns N' Roses): Speaking for myself personally, we'd see Lars around a lot from city to city, but the rest of the guys, we didn't really talk to them much at all. Never really saw them or anything.

John L Reese: Lars hung with Slash, Duff and Matt a lot, and flew on our private plane a few times.

Jeanne Marie Laskas: Before their show, while Faith No More and Metallica play in the hot sun, the GN'R guys spend their day at the hotel, getting mentally prepared for their performance. Slash drinks Jack Daniel's and watches cartoons. Bass player Duff McKagan talks to his wife on the telephone; his heart has been aching a lot lately. Some of the other guys sleep; they often don't get to bed until seven am. Axl works out on his amazing, state-of-the-art exercise machine, chats with his brother and sister, who are accompanying him on the tour, then has his back cracked and his ankles taped, gets a massage and stretches his throat muscles with operatic warm-ups.

When they finally get to the stadium, all the guys except Axl convene in one large dressing room where they hold their breath, squinch up their faces and work their skinny legs into impossibly skinny leather jeans. They laugh, tease one another about their latest softball-playing antics, drink, flip through *Penthouse*, *Raw Sex*, *Hot Split*, *Big Boobs* and other magazines that have been fanned out for them just so, like literature in a doctor's office.

July 30. After Axl is diagnosed as having damaged his vocal chords, the next three shows have to be rescheduled.

Bill Gould (bassist, Faith No More): Every band in the world might think they want to open for Guns N' Roses but, lemme tell you, it's been a real ugly personal experience having to deal with all the shit that surrounds this fucking circus.

Mike Patton (singer, Faith No More): They were playing one night, and Duff walks up to Axl and pats him on the head, like a loving comrade type thing, and Axl Rose immediately brings the show to a halt. This is in front of 80,000 people, and he screams: "Don't you ever touch my head again, motherfucker!" Duff just walked away, wounded. We found out later that it was because he's going bald and he's worried that if you touch his hair it'll fall out. Every little follicle counts.

August 8. The tour resumes at the Olympic Stadium, Montreal, Canada. Metallica are forced to end their set prematurely when James Hetfield suffers third-degree burns to his left hand when he accidentally steps in front of a flame jet. Nevertheless, Guns N' Roses make fans wait several hours before they finally take the stage. A few songs into their set, problems with the sound surface, so Axl storms off stage, sparking a huge riot. The next seven shows are rescheduled.

> **"The flame was moving along the stage, eight feet tall. It engulfed James."**
> **LARS ULRICH**

James Hetfield: Basically, our pyro guy will come in and say if something's going to be changed. He came and said: "Okay, the *Fade To Black* stuff will be out on the wings so don't go out there." But he didn't specify that it was going to be in addition to what's already there.

Lars Ulrich: It was the first show back after about four dates that were cancelled because Axl had some problems with his throat. So we were back again, everybody was very excited to be back playing, and for the first hour and 10 minutes, or whatever it was we played, it was great. The last couple of seconds before the cue, it was eerie. I just knew he shouldn't be standing where he was standing. And then the flame from hell comes. It was moving down the stage, eight feet tall, and just completely engulfs him.

James Hetfield: It was the worst pain I ever felt in my whole life.

Jason Newsted (bassist, Metallica): His skin was bubbling like on *The Toxic Avenger*.

Matt Sorum (Guns N' Roses): We hustled on as soon as we could. It was a couple of hours people were waiting, so they were like, "Uuurghh!" When we got up there it was really bad. People were sitting down.

ROSS HALFIN; GETTY

Slash: The PA fed back the entire time, the monitors fed back, the crowd was like, non-existent… It was driving me crazy.

Axl Rose: I told Slash: "Two more songs. If we can't get it fixed, I gotta go." We did more than two more songs, and finally I'm like: "I don't know what to do." Gilby was like: "Dude, I can't hear…" And Duff was like: "I can't hear either." So we had a little huddle, and it was like: "We're outta here."

Kirk Hammett (guitarist, Metallica): He said something into the mic and then just threw it down and walked off stage. Axl didn't wanna be outdone. That's when all hell broke lose. People just storming into the grandstands and destroying everything.

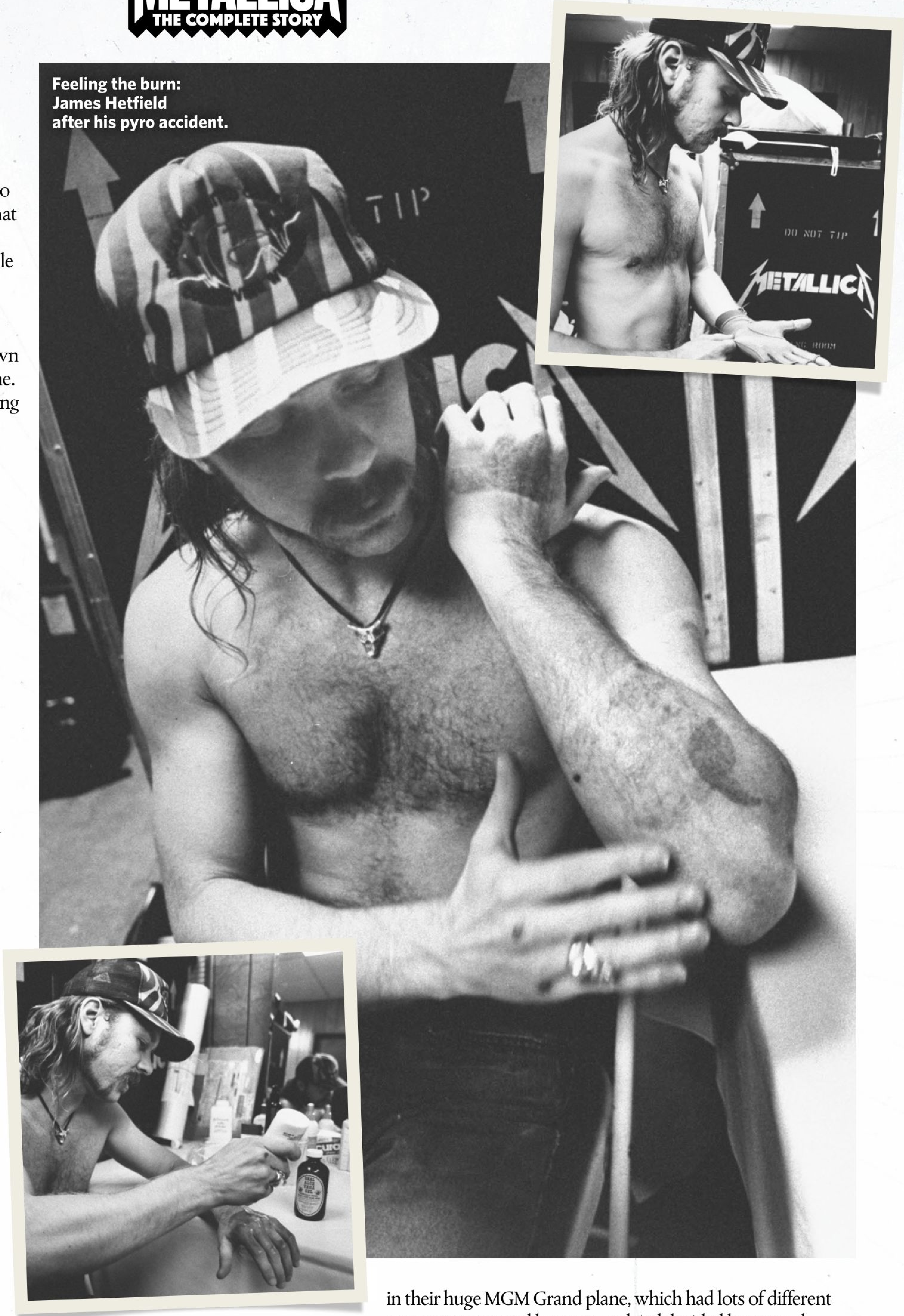
Jason Newsted: They start freaking. Turning over cop cars, fighting the police, burning everything in sight.

Wendy Laister: We were all stuck in the venue and couldn't get out. People were pushing lamp-posts through plate-glass windows and ransacking the stores.

Kirk Hammett: We go into their dressing room and they're acting like nothing happened.

Jason Newsted: Axl's down there with the cigarette holder in one hand and the champagne glass in the other. He says: "My voice is giving me trouble…" If your voice is giving you trouble, you probably shouldn't be drinking or smoking.

August 25. Having recuperated at home in California, Hetfield returns to active duty, but performing vocals only when the tour resumes at Phoenix International Raceway, Avondale, Arizona. Guitar tech John Marshall (of the band Metal Church) has been brought in to play Hetfield's guitar parts.
James Hetfield: When I went back for the first time and those flames went up, my heart raced. It's like when you're a kid, if something scares you, you go do it anyway. I'm not going to fire the pyro guy. It was my mistake too, so I'm going to learn from it. That's the Metallica way.



Feeling the burn: James Hetfield after his pyro accident.

August 27. Aggie Memorial Stadium, Las Cruces, New Mexico. Axl asks the crowd how many people there are from Las Cruces. After some cheers and raised hands, he then asks how many people would actually admit to being from Las Cruces. The question is answered with many bottles thrown at the stage, raised middle fingers, and screams of: "Fuck you, Axl!"
James Hetfield (reading from Axl Rose's tour rider): Horrible truths. The piddly wants and needs of certain folks on the road. Axl 'Pose's' dressing-room requirements – absolutely no substitutions. One cup of cubed ham. It's got to be cubed so it can get down his little neck. One rib-eye steak dinner. One gourmet cheese tray. Pepperoni pizza – fresh. I think that's just for throwin' around. Cans of assorted Pringles chips… bottle of Dom Perignon. That's where the money's at, right there. Just crap.

August 28. Guns N' Roses throw a bash at the Old Homestead Restaurant, New York City, treating friends to a huge feast followed by a casino-style backstage party, complete with ice sculptures and craps tables. It is attended by singer-songwriter Carole King and members of Metallica and Faith No More.
Wendy Laister: We had Axl's half-brother, Stuart Bailey, on the road with us, organising parties. That was his job. So every night after the show there would be some kind of fairly elaborate event, usually at the venue, involving, well, anything from mud-wrestling to strippers. We were flying in to New York in their huge MGM Grand plane, which had lots of different compartments and lounges, and Axl decided he wanted to throw a party to thank the crew for all their hard work. He loved the Old Homestead, so I managed to book the whole place. And then they decided they'd like to play a gig that night as well. So we had this terrific party, and then we went on to play a secret show at the Continental, a tiny little club.

August 29. The Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans, Louisiana.
Jeanne Marie Laskas (writing in *Life* magazine): When the band finally leaves the stage, a big red sign flashes 'GUNS N' ROSES, GUNS N' ROSES, GUNS N' ROSES', like an 'APPLAUSE' sign, suggesting in no uncertain terms that it would be okay for their fans to ask for an encore. Which they do. The band comes out, sings *Paradise City* and exits, returning one last time for a bow, arm-in-arm, as in a Broadway show. Axl tosses roses into the crowd, the other guys throw guitar picks and drumsticks. And then more explosions – 20 bangs, four fireballs and 100 fireworks – and as the band leaves for the last time the red lights flash: 'THANK YOU WE LOVE YOU, THANK YOU WE LOVE YOU'. After, there is the usual backstage party with the usual hors d' oeuvres, open bar, pinball machines, pool table, hot tub and strippers. But these strippers say the heck with the hot tub and just do their stripping and undulating right on

GETTY x5

the tables. Duff doesn't go to the party, he goes back to the hotel and calls Linda. Slash doesn't stay at the party, he goes back to the hotel with Renee. Axl stays at the party until five am.

September 4. The Astrodome, Houston, Texas. Twenty strippers are paid to attend the Guns N' Roses aftershow party.
Mike Bordin (drummer, Faith No More): To me, the atmosphere is not conducive to this band playing well. It's like the Village People syndrome. Showbusiness. Mass entertainment.

Mike Patton: Basically, we are a small band. We are a pubic hair in Guns N' Roses's shower.

Jeanne Marie Laskas: There was almost zero interaction between the two bands that I saw. GN'R seemed to be having a lot more fun than Metallica, except everyone was so sick of Axl. Slash was a delight – to everyone. Duff was a delight, and sort of lovable in a goofy way. Those are the two I really remember. Axl was nocturnal, and freaked out when the sun came up. I spent very little time with Metallica because they seemed so cranky. Maybe they were just mad that GN'R was getting all the attention. I don't remember GN'R caring one whit about Metallica, and Metallica looking on and scowling.

September 13. The Exhibition Stadium, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Duff McKagan: A lot of nights I wake up and I'm, like: "Where am I? What city?" And you run to the window and look out and try to figure it all out. You actually forget who you are. It's, like, I am completely blank. I end up a lot of times just sitting on my bed, and I'll find tears start coming out of my eyes and my heart is just aching. It's, like, please let there be another show soon.

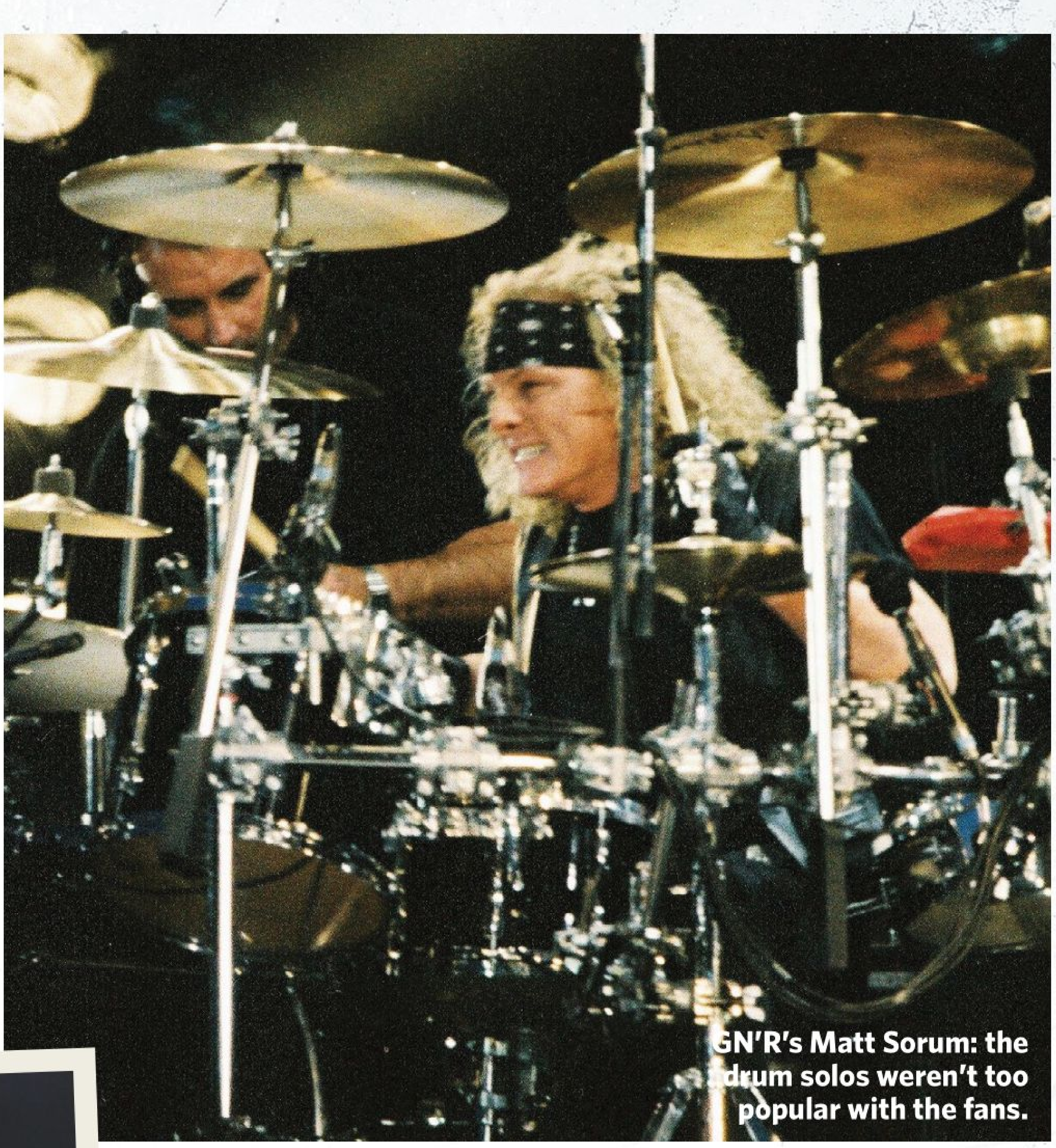
September 15. Hubert H Humphrey Metrodome, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
Jon Bream (reviewer, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*): The best-selling T-shirts last night were the two $23 models with both GN'R and Metallica on them, according to vendor Curtis Nachtsheim. As for the individual band shirts, he said the GN'R ones were outselling Metallica's. Vendors expected to sell more than $500,000 worth of souvenirs.

September 17. Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City, Missouri is GN'R's first show in Missouri since the infamous riot in 1991 at St Louis. Axl goes on a huge tirade against St Louis and dedicates* Out Ta Get Me *to the city. Body Count replace Faith No More as the opening act.
John L Reese: I do not specifically remember the circumstances behind that. I believe it was something said in the press by Faith No More, but I am not sure.

Bill Gould (Faith No More): We said a lot of shit, and didn't realise how bad it was until we got caught. Axl was real straight with us, but it was an ugly scene. He said: "It's like I went away and came back home to find you guys fucked my wife." We were thrown off the tour for five hours, but we apologised. It was like being in the principal's office. He said: "I only like you guys, Nirvana, Jane's Addiction and two other bands, and all of you hate me. Why do you hate me?"

Lars Ulrich: Nothing against Faith No More, but I wish Body Count had been on this whole tour. I gotta admit, I wasn't so sold on them at the beginning, and we were like: "Oh-oh, here come the riots every night!"

September 19. During a show at Mile High Stadium, Denver, Colorado, Axl mysteriously leaves the stage mid-set, leaving the rest of GN'R to play several songs without him.
James Hetfield: I didn't understand what happened. I was just sitting back having dinner, and our tour manager comes back and says: "Man, don't go anywhere. Axl's left the building." I don't know what the fuck happened, cos I heard the band playing a song, so I guess they finally coaxed him back. The police locked all the gates so he couldn't leave again. That's when it turns into a joke! That's like a job. Imagine going to work and being locked in, like, jail or something.



GN'R's Matt Sorum: the drum solos weren't too popular with the fans.

> "You forget who you are. I sat on my bed, tears coming out of my eyes."
> DUFF McKAGAN

September 24. Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum, Oakland, California.
James Hetfield: Being a frontman [without playing rhythm guitar, due to his burned hand] was weird. It reminded me how much I really loved fucking playing rhythm guitar. Especially during some of the older songs, where there's a lot of guitar work or instrumental shit. It's like: "What the fuck do I do?" I'd just leave. Go backstage and have a beer.

September 30. Despite a letter of protest from Police Officers Association President Harry O Eastus II, Ice-T of Body Count performs his hugely controversial song* Cop Killer *on stage at the Jack Murphy Stadium, San Diego, California.
Michael Granberry (journalist, *Los Angeles Times*): Controversial singer Ice-T angered police but thrilled concert-goers when he defied promoters and sang his much-ballyhooed anthem *Cop Killer* with as much on-stage defiance and in-your-face fanfare as he could muster.

October 6, 1992. The tour comes to an end with the final show at the Kingdome, Seattle, Washington, having grossed over $32m from a total audience of almost 1.2m people.
Axl Rose: Let me tell you a couple of things about Metallica. First off, they do a lot of bitchin' for a band that got paid about 20 per cent or 30 per cent more than what they fucking deserved at a show, because they didn't… I thought I was friends with these people. I don't know how long they were on the road, but there was nobody in their crew that had ever got a bonus or paid anything extra for workin' their fucking ass off.

James Hetfield: It [the tour] was different. It was a good idea. We really had no idea what was going to come with it. We were out to show people that there was something a little more progressive and hard-core than Guns N' Roses. And to go about it our way. But it was hard going on, dealing with Axl and his attitude. It's not something we'd want to do again.

Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett, James Hetfield and Jason Newsted: the new-look, *Load*-era Metallica

HEROES OF

Abysmal misstep or misunderstood classic? Load boasted a new image, a new logo and, most controversially, a new sound. Twenty years after its 1996 release, we revisited the most divisive album of Metallica's career

WORDS: PAUL BRANNIGAN
PICS: ROSS HALFIN

That Metallica didn't take the 25th anniversary staging of the Woodstock festival entirely seriously was evident even before the San Franciscan quartet followed Nine Inch Nails onto the site's North Stage on the evening of August 13, 1994. Had they perused the festival's official merchandise stalls, the 350,000 music fans who streamed on to Winston Farm in Saugerties, New York, that weekend, they would have spotted a bespoke 'Metallistock' t-shirt featuring the band's 'Scary Man' mascot with dollar bill symbols in his eyes, flowers in his hands and a 'peace sign' pendant around his neck, under which was scrawled the words 'Hippie Shit'.

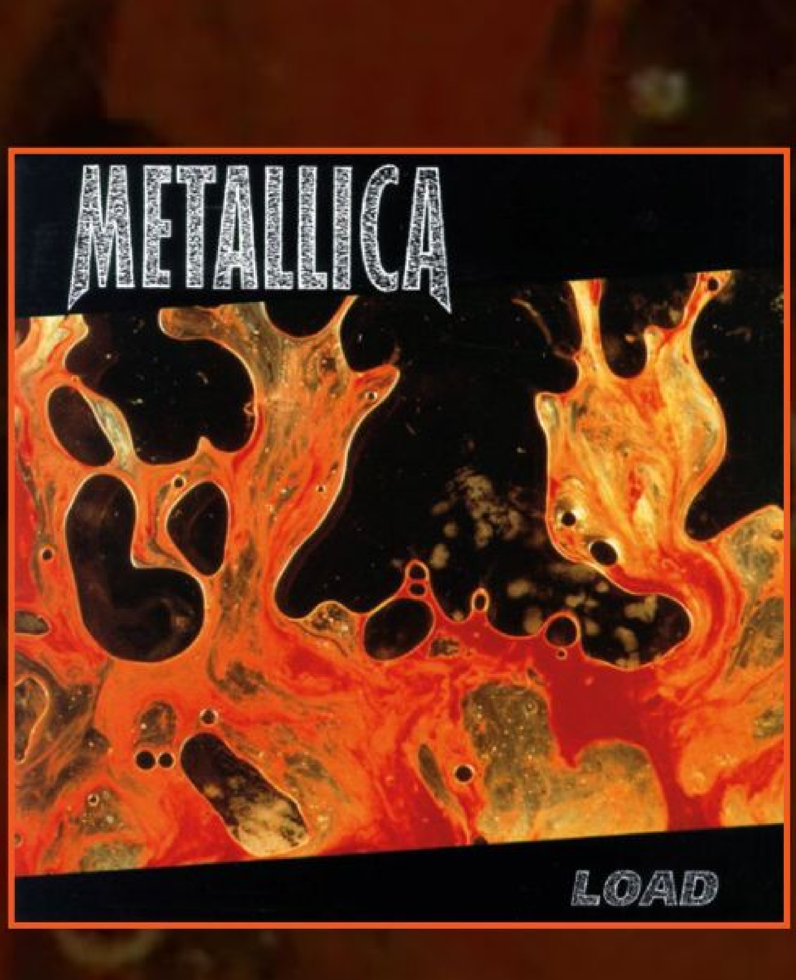
Billed as '2 More Days of Peace and Music', the event's faux nostalgia might have captured the imagination of America's 'baby boomer' demographic, but for Metallica it primarily represented a tidy paycheck and an opportunity to piss about in front of a live TV audience.

And so, following James Hetfield's cheery "Fuck you!" greeting, heavy metal's biggest band chose to reintroduce themselves to the American public by opening their sub-headline slot with *Breadfan*, an obscure B-side track written by cult Welsh prog-rock trio Budgie. Further mischief was to follow, with James introducing perennial live favourite *Seek & Destroy* as a new song written by Jason Newsted, telling the crowd "since he wrote it, he's going to have to sing it".

Even those in on the joke, however, were confused to hear the *Kill 'Em All*-era standard's mid-section melt into an extended blues-rock jam. Though only the four men onstage knew it, this was the watching world's first taste of what would become Metallica's controversial sixth album, *Load*.

James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich began work on the follow-up to Metallica's self-titled fifth album in the spring of 1994, less than one year after their Nowhere Else To Roam tour concluded at the Rock Werchter festival in Belgium.

Much had changed in the music world since the release of the phenomenally successful Black Album: Bruce Dickinson had walked out of Iron Maiden; Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain, the latest media-anointed 'saviour of rock', had recently killed himself at home in Seattle; and in California, Green Day and The Offspring had just released *Dookie* and *Smash*, two albums that would finally 'break' punk rock in the US. Metallica's founding members returned to songwriting duties utilising the tried-and-trusted methodology they'd



THE DAY

developed when they first got together as teenagers, studiously sifting through James's home-recorded 'riff tape' cassette collection in order to identify musical motifs that might form the spine of new songs.

Working in a basement studio in Lars's hilltop Marin County home – a facility dubbed 'The Dungeon' – the guitarist and drummer set to arranging and committing these ideas to tape.

On November 28, 'Streamline' (later retitled *Wasting My Hate*) became the first new Metallica demo recording in four years.

On November 30, a second song, 'Load', (aka *King Nothing*) was tracked. Before the year's end, three more recordings – 'Devil Dance' (later *Devil's Dance*), 'Fixer' (aka *Fixxxer*) and 'Mouldy' (*Hero Of The Day*) were now in the can.

By Easter 1995, the duo had 13 songs – including *The Outlaw Torn*, featuring that bluesy riff previewed at Woodstock – mapped out. And still the ideas kept on coming.

"All this material had built up on the road," James explained. "There were bags and bags of tapes with riffs on them… stuff we had accumulated from five years of not writing.

"First it was like, 'OK, let's stop at 20 songs.' Then we would get going and say, 'All right, we'll stop at 30.'

It was fucking crazy."

Metallica entered The Plant studios in Sausalito, California on May 1, 1995 to begin tracking the album, retaining Bob Rock's services as producer following his sterling work on *The Black Album*. At the outset, James and Lars laid out their desire that the new songs should be looser, more organic and more spontaneous than previous recordings, an aim Bob Rock tried to accommodate by encouraging the four musicians to play off one another in the studio, experiment with tunings, textures and tones, and keep open minds in regards to the flow of ideas. To ensure that the band were not overwhelmed, Bob also suggested that they should focus upon roughly half of the 27 songs sketched out at The Dungeon; there would be time in the future to revisit the remaining material and work on it.

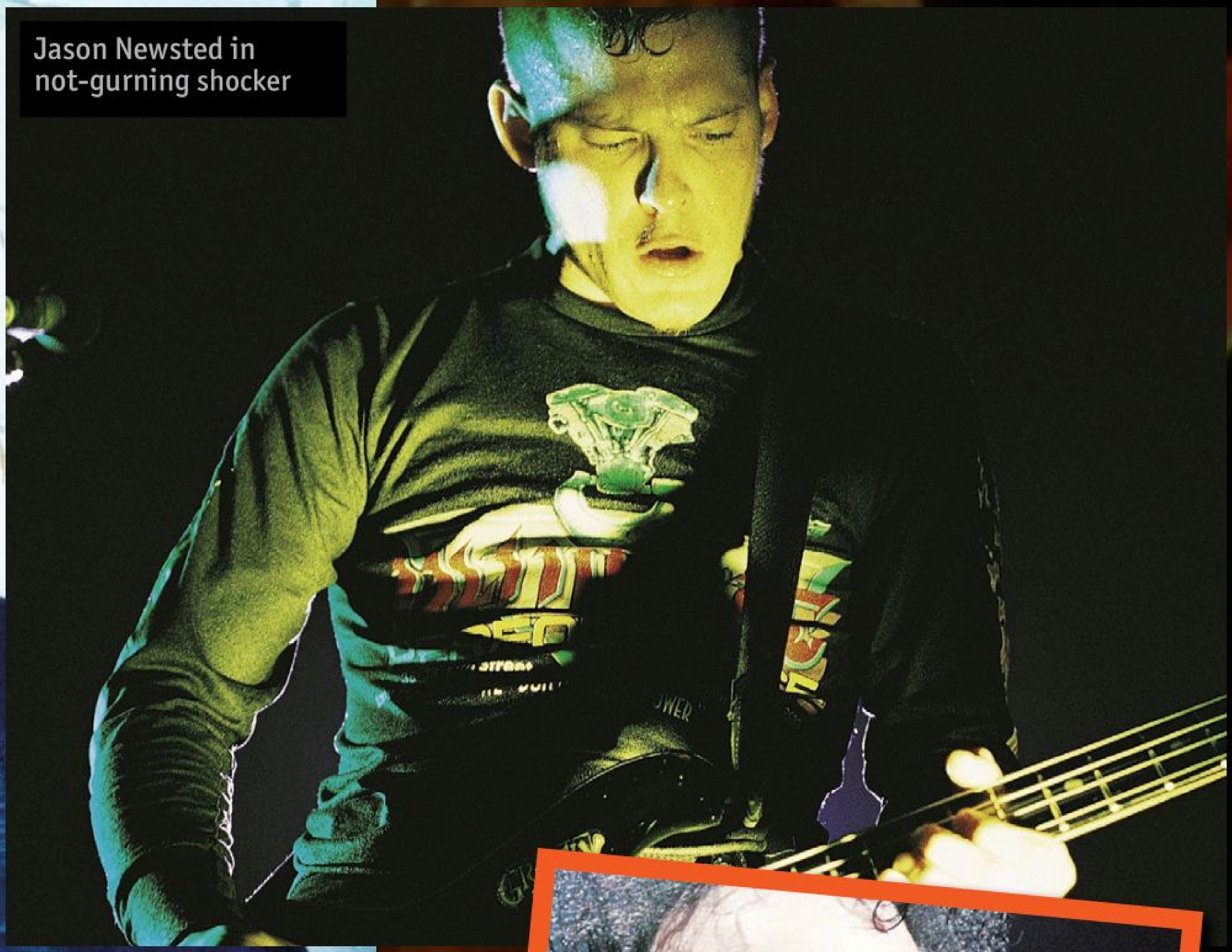
> "IT'S OUR WILDEST IMAGINATION"
>
> **LARS ULRICH WAS STOKED ON LOAD'S LOOSER DIRECTION**

"We're almost having fun in the studio," Lars revealed as the sessions got underway. "We're doing basically what we hoped for in our wildest imagination, which is not getting caught in some anal torment of precision and tightness. The new songs we're writing just called for a looser, livelier type of thing and we set our goal with this record to try and capture more the spirit of the songs than worrying about the technical stuff."

The first real indications of the new mood in the camp came in mid-August with the premiere of new tracks, *2x4* and *Devil's Dance*, at a fanclub members-only show convened as a warm-up for the band's first headline appearance at Donington Park. In November, James called another 'time out', to embark upon a trek into the wilds of Wyoming. The singer had been informed that his father, Virgil, had advanced-stage cancer, and would not beat the disease, and he wished for some time alone to process this tragic information.

Alone with his thoughts in a tent in the snow-covered wilderness, the singer used lead-tipped bullets to write down ideas that would later form some of his new album's most emotional, open-hearted lyrics. Upon his return to The Plant, James learned that his bandmates had broken new ground on the album. Encouraged by Lars, for the very first time Kirk Hammett had laid down some rhythm guitar tracks in the

Wot, no mullet? James and the guys unveiled a new image that alienated many fans



Jason Newsted in not-gurning shocker

Kirk had a few choice words for anyone who objected to his eyeliner...

"FANS GOT TURNED OFF BY THE IMAGE"

PAPA HET ACKNOWLEDGES THAT METALLICA'S EVOLUTION MAY HAVE BEEN DRASTIC

studio. Wisely, the guitarist had not sought to emulate James's forensically precise riffing, instead devising chord patterns which complemented the central riffs. Sensitive to the idea that Metallica's frontman might view Kirk's additions as an affront to his vision for the songs, Bob assured James that he could wipe the tracks if necessary, but repeated listens convinced the guitarist that there was merit to this new approach, and harmony prevailed.

Conscious that their charges' new-found sense of experimentation might render their studio sessions entirely open-ended, Elektra Records, Metallica's US label, set May 1, 1996 as the date for their forthcoming album to be mastered. In March, operations shifted to America's East Coast, with the band commandeering *three* recording studios in New York: two rooms at Right Track Recording on West 48th Street and an additional space at Quad Recording, across the street at 723 7th Avenue.

With the sessions still ongoing, the quartet then invited the world's media to New York to hear previews of the album, and this writer was among those selected to attend. Looming deadlines notwithstanding, Metallica appeared utterly relaxed and carefree as they threw open the doors at Right Track. When an unmastered CD-R of new songs was aired on the studio's stereo system, a giddy Kirk added enthusiastic air guitar flourishes while James, Jason and Lars sang along lustily. On first listen, the quartet's new recordings sounded staggeringly powerful, but a pronounced shift in sound was immediately apparent, with the influence of 1970s hard rock masters Aerosmith, ZZ Top, Ted Nugent and Lynyrd Skynyrd notable.

"Before you start working on a new record, you wonder if you can still deliver," shouted Lars over the music. "But once James and I lock in and start work together, it's pretty much unstoppable. The bottom line is, playing and writing with James still gets my dick as hard now as it did in '81."

When it was suggested to Lars that Metallica's new songs implied the band were becoming ever more mainstream and, heaven forbid, respectable, the drummer let out an exaggerated sigh.

"We've had that for years," he countered. "When we put *Fade To Black* on *Ride The Lightning*, people were saying Slayer were the alternative to Metallica because we were playing this acoustic garbage. People should get off their asses to topple us. Like, here's a guitar – blow us away if you think you can."

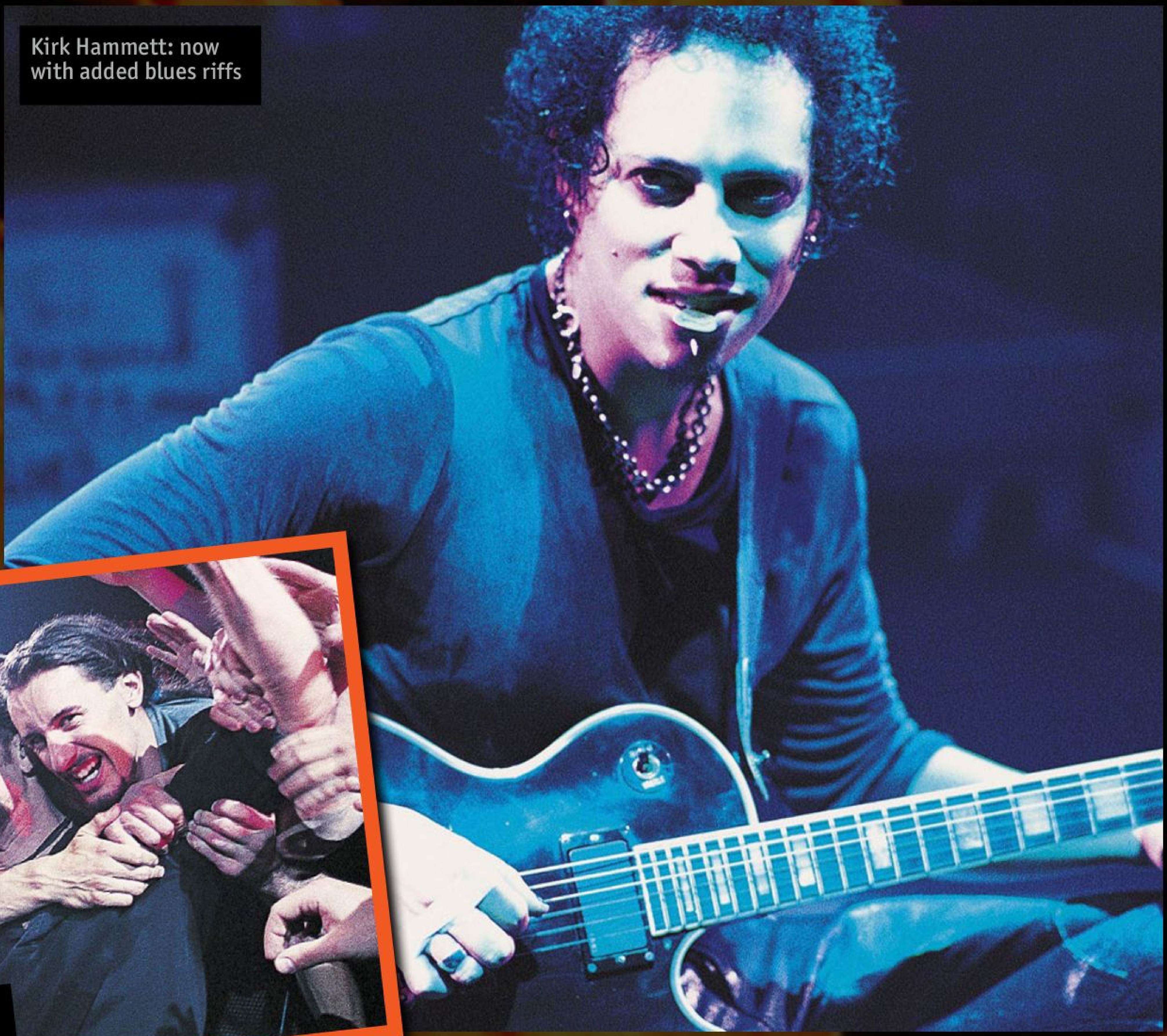
Metallica's new album, *Load*, was released in the UK on June 3, 1996. Though advance press on the record was overwhelmingly positive – *Metal Hammer* awarded the collection 4.5 out of 5, stating that the band "have continued their evolution into the best heavy metal band of the modern age" – reaction from fans was decidedly mixed.

For some, the adoption of 70s rock tropes (and indeed a pronounced country influence on the ballad *Mama Said*) was regarded as a betrayal of the band's heavy metal roots: more alarming still was the imagery which accompanied the release. The fact that the band had altered their iconic logo served notice of a wholesale image overhaul. Each of the four musicians now sported short hair, and were photographed sporting eyeliner, tailored shirts and, in Lars's case, a fur coat Elton John might have deemed ostentatious.

The album's striking cover – a photograph by Brooklyn-born artist Andres Serrano created by mixing the artist's own semen and bovine blood between two sheets of Plexiglas – was intended to evoke the idea of rebirth, but for many old-school Metallica fans, the band they had grown up with was now dead. Entirely conscious of the indignation their new sound and look was provoking, the band were bullish to the point of arrogance.

"I think we made a really fucking great album, and people aren't going to walk away from our music even if they think we look like 'poofs'," said Kirk bluntly. "At the end of the day, it all begins and ends with the music. I think we're now much more than a heavy metal band." In retrospect, much of the outrage Load inspired seems comically overblown. At its best – on first single

Lars, ever confident, suggests critics should "get off their asses" to do better


Kirk Hammett: now with added blues riffs

Not *all* the fans hated *Load*, to be fair

Until It Sleeps, on the stirring *The Outlaw Torn* and the seething *Bleeding Me* – the album offered a bold, mature and liberating re-imagining of the Metallica sound. The album's biggest fault however, was quality control. *2x4* and *Ronnie* are, in hindsight, a bit throwaway, while too much of the material – *Cure, The House Jack Built* and *Thorn Within* in particular – is simply mediocre.

Metallica's openness to experimentation is laudable, but in their quest to push boundaries, James and Lars appeared too easily satisfied with material that, a decade earlier, would never have made it out of their El Cerrito garage. In 2003, looking back on an album that had now passed the five million sales mark in America alone, Lars acknowledged as much.

"In retrospect, the *Load/Reload* stuff could have used a little bit of editing," the drummer admitted. "But when James and I ended up writing 27 songs for that album in the fall of '95, we were damn well going to put all 27 on the album. In retrospect, could the world have done with 12 or 15 less of those? Probably, but back then we didn't have an edit button on our instrument panel."

James was even more blunt when interviewed that same year."[We were] trying to be something we weren't and then that confused us even further musically," he stated. "There's quite a few great songs on there that could have been greater if the cover and the pictures were different I think. A lot of the fans got turned off quite a bit from the music but mostly, I think, from the image. It just doesn't work. You absolutely have to evolve, but let's have it evolve naturally. It didn't seem natural to me."

"THEY WERE A TARGET"

LOAD PRODUCER BOB ROCK THINKS METALLICA GET TOO MUCH FLAK

"They were enjoying life," says Bob in the album's defence. "When you become the biggest band [in metal], you become a target. We always want the people we love and idolise and look up to to stay the same. Accomplishing The Black Album and three years of touring and everything, it took them to a different place. I think they started letting down their guard and became… people. That's what I saw and that's what I enjoyed being around."

As is so often the case, perhaps the last word on *Load* should be left to Metallica's biggest fan, their ever-vocal drummer."It felt like a big 'fuck you'," says Lars. "Not to the fans, more to the conservative element that was running through the heavy metal community, the predictability of all of it. It was a challenge to the heavy metal community and I'm proud of that, because once in a while the heavy metal community needs a good fucking kick up its ass." ✠

I LOVE LOAD!

NERGAL, BEHEMOTH

"When they released *The Black Album*, I thought it was OK but never really dug it, even though everyone fell in love with it. Then they put out *Load* and *Reload*, and I took a listen and thought, 'OK', but it'd never give me a boner, you know? These days I appreciate the music a lot more. I became a much bigger Metallica fan in the last five years.

"*Load* is a cool record. *Mama Said* is cool, and with me doing some semi-country stuff [to be released late this year], I've more understanding of Metallica doing songs like that. I'd never do a song like that under the Behemoth name, but Metallica can do whatever they want.

"Until It Sleeps is one of the best songs ever, with the best video ever. There have been several videos where we looked up to that video and just showed it to the director, like,'Hey, we need some inspiration coming from these guys.'"

"I used to dash things when I was younger and more immature. Now I say, 'I don't dig it now but give it five years and it might be my favourite record.' Give it some time – you grow into things. I was never a diehard Metallica fan but now I'm excited for the new record."

I HATE LOAD!

PHILLY BYRNE, GAMA BOMB

"I suppose when you're six albums into your career and your fifth was a flirtation with accessibility that made you one of the biggest bands in the world, it must feel like you've got licence to push the musical boat out even further.

"I think that's why Metallica overestimated themselves so badly with *Load*. It was a gateway album for me. I was 13 when it came out and discovered Metallica as a result. I loved *Ain't My Bitch, Until It Sleeps* and *King Nothing*.

"I cut pictures of them out of this very mag and stuck them to my school folder, which is the tween equivalent of a civil partnership. But when I discovered their back catalogue, I found so much energy, raw ability and attitude there, it made *Load* shrink into perspective. I got fat on old Metallica. Honestly, I haven't listened to *Load* in 15 years.

"Metallica are cool dudes, and I owe them: *Kill 'Em All* made me want to join a thrash band. But *Load*, in the cold light of day, is a turgid, mid-period attempt to find artistic nourishment in genres they have no claim to play in. And the less said about *Reload* the better. Except maybe *The Memory Remains*."

GETTY X2

20 YEARS OF

We revisit the songs on Metallica's covers album that introduced a generation to metal and punk's founding fathers

WORDS: CHRIS CHANTLER

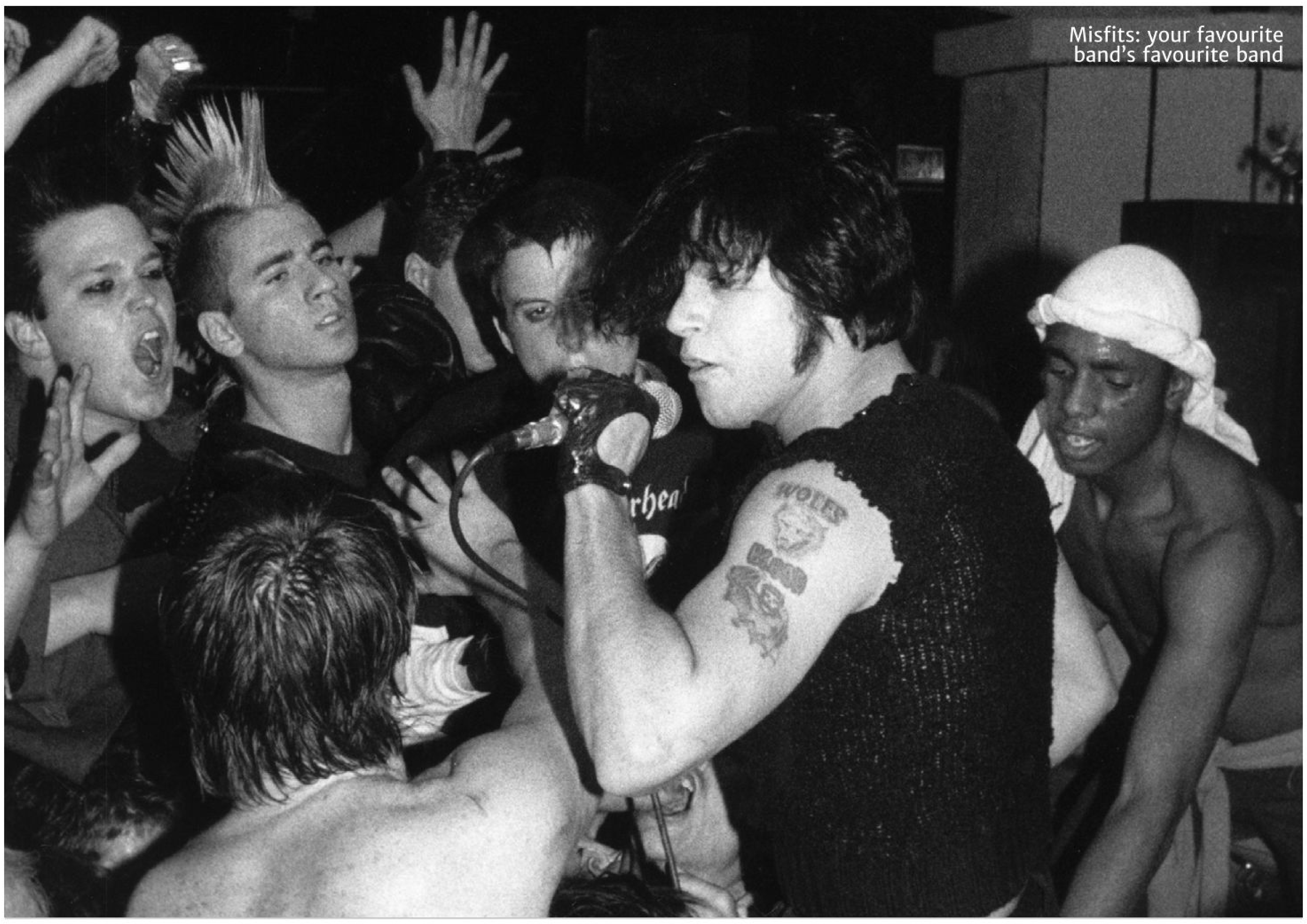
In the autumn of 1998, after a three-album run of *Metallica, Load* and *Reload* had seen them evolve from thrash metal's greatest band to an arena rock behemoth, Metallica set about doing what they do best: blindsiding everyone with something completely unexpected. "Metallica still needs to have fun," Lars Ulrich told *Billboard* that November. "We made three pretty serious albums in a row. It was time to do something different." Released on November 23 of that year, that "something" turned out to be *Garage Inc* – a monstrous double-disc collection of covers of seminal rock and metal songs that had inspired the Four Horsemen over the years. While the second disc was a smorgasbord of B-sides from various Metallica releases across their career, the first was a brand new collection of fresh takes on timeless classics. We dissect that colossal first half – with a little help from some of the bands who inspired it. ▶

GARAGE INC.

1. FREE SPEECH FOR THE DUMB (1982)
DISCHARGE

It still seems a bold move for the world's biggest metal band to open a new record with a grinding dirge by Stoke's most brutal punk terrorists. Once hated by the punk press for their relentlessly basic, bleak noise assaults – hammered out to a frantic stuttering rhythm (the 'd-beat', itself inspiring a global subgenre) – Discharge laid the template for metallic hardcore, and were keenly adopted by the metal underground.

There was a 90s mini-industry in Discharge covers among discerning metal bigwigs such as Anthrax, Machine Head and Soulfly, but with this face-ripping opener, Metallica stayed faithful to the original (from seminal 1982 debut *Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing*), while slowing it down to a metallic grind.



Misfits: your favourite band's favourite band

2. IT'S ELECTRIC (1980)
DIAMOND HEAD

Joining Iron Maiden, Saxon and Def Leppard in the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal, Diamond Head were tipped for megastardom in 1980. Due to bad management decisions and wrong deals, that didn't happen, but the Stourbridge quartet influenced Lars Ulrich, who crossed the Atlantic to watch them live and hang out. Shortly after, their setlists were getting replicated by a fledgling Metallica. *It's Electric* was inspired by an AC/DC concert in Birmingham in 1977.

BRIAN TATLER
(Diamond Head guitarist, 1977+)

Can you remember *It's Electric* taking shape?
"This was our 45th song, written in June 1978. Everything before it was scrapped, but this had something special and entered our live set – not that we did many gigs then! It went down well live and was deemed good enough for our debut album [1980's *Lightning To The Nations*]."

When did you first hear of Metallica covering Diamond Head?
"In 1982 Lars sent a rehearsal room cassette of them playing *It's Electric*. Then in November 1984 I got sent a copy of the *Creeping Death* 12" with *Am I Evil?* on the flipside. I was impressed that they'd gone to the trouble to work out, record and release one of our songs – even the solo was pretty much spot on. I had no idea of the potential of Metallica at this point, but I was flattered."

How's the relationship between Metallica and Diamond Head in 2018?
"Very strong. In October 2017 I went to see Metallica on their Hardwired tour. It was a brilliant show and I caught up with Lars backstage. Metallica are unrivalled in their field; there is nobody even close. I fully appreciate all that they've done for Diamond Head over the years."

3. SABBRA CADABRA (1973)
BLACK SABBATH

This was the *Garage Inc* track closest to Jason Newsted's heart. "Geezer Butler is my favourite bassist of all time," he told fan club magazine *So What!* "So needless to say, that was the shit, and the one that I tried the hardest to pay the most attention to be ultra-respectful on."

From the Brummie metal inventors' fifth LP, *Sabbath Bloody Sabbath*, it was an unusually chirpy, loved-up rock'n'roll tune. "It's that opening riff that just really gets us going," Kirk said in 1998, when Metallica were still in the studio playing around with the song. "We might try to glue *Sabbra Cadabra* together with another Sabbath song." In the event, *A National Acrobat* was plucked from the same album and interpolated into the mid-section, neatly seguing from a carefree song about shagging to some of Geezer's weightiest lyrical concerns (although sadly this meant we didn't get to hear James sing, *'Lovely lay-yay-yay-yay-deh'*).

4. TURN THE PAGE (1973)
BOB SEGER

In an interview with *Creem* magazine just before he wrote this song for his sixth album, *Back In '72* (released in 1973), Bob addressed why so few musicians had covered his material: "It seems like the only people who do my stuff are these really off-the-wall cats looking for really off-the-wall stuff," he reckoned. Since garnering an unfair reputation for radio-friendly MOR, the Detroit singer-songwriter may have seemed an off-the-wall choice for Metallica in 1998, but this emotive ode to the road suited them perfectly; James Hetfield said that the first time he heard *Turn The Page*, he swore Metallica could have written it. Yet whenever any Metallicat talks about this road-weary ballad, they seem to distance themselves from its creator. "It's a very odd choice. I'm not a big Bob Seger fan," Kirk confessed at the time. "But when you hear it, you can really picture James singing it"

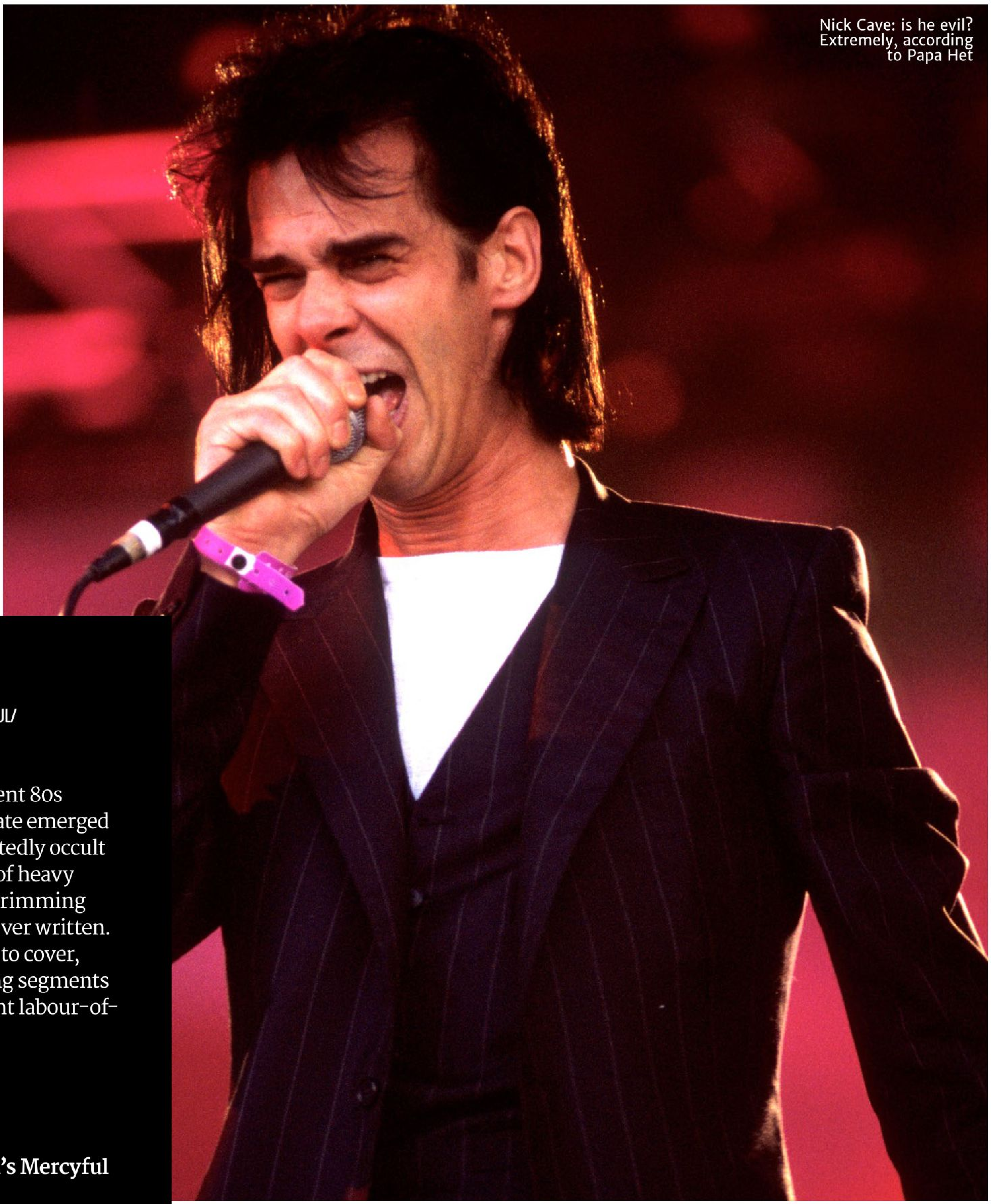
5. DIE, DIE MY DARLING (1984)
MISFITS

It was the ever-discerning, eclectic music-lover Cliff Burton who got Lars, James and Kirk into these New Jersey horror punks, commandeering every tour van stereo and endlessly flipping Misfits tapes. By 1986, barely a Metallica photoshoot went by without a bit of visible Misfits merch, and *Last Caress* (from Misfits' 1980 *Beware* EP) remains one of Metallica's best-loved covers. Metallica had also jammed Misfits' *London Dungeon* since the early days – including onstage with Glenn Danzig in 1994. Here they settled on *Die, Die My Darling* (originally recorded in 1981, but not released until after the band split up), presumably because it's just so darn catchy.

6. LOVERMAN (1994)
NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS

Amid these love letters to 70s rock and 80s metal is this brooding alternative epic of obsessive lust, written in 1994 by an Australian gothic art-rock maestro. *Loverman* was always the odd man out on *Garage Inc*, but Papa Het made sure he felt right at home. "Cave is extremely evil, whether he's trying to be or not," James explained of his quirky pick. "I just love the feel of that song and I knew we could do it properly, that we could do it justice."

Metallica recorded the song at 3am, burnt out after a long, hard day in the studio, which ideally captured the mood: "It was the perfect vibe to do that track," Kirk said. "Definitely a high point."


Nick Cave: is he evil? Extremely, according to Papa Het

7. MERCYFUL FATE
(SATAN'S FALL/CURSE OF THE PHARAOHS/A CORPSE WITHOUT SOUL/ INTO THE COVEN/EVIL 1982, 1983)

MERCYFUL FATE

Contemporaries of Metallica on the nascent 80s extreme metal underground, Mercyful Fate emerged from Copenhagen, Denmark with a devotedly occult but sophisticated and progressive brand of heavy metal, their first, brief phase of activity brimming with some of the mightiest metal tunes ever written. Metallica couldn't choose just one or two to cover, so they went with five, carefully arranging segments together to create *Garage Inc*'s magnificent labour-of-love centrepiece.

KING DIAMOND
(Mercyful Fate singer, 1981+)

When did you first hear about Metallica's Mercyful Fate medley?

"I didn't know they were planning it. Lars called me up at home and said to me, 'Hey, what's up, we're recording stuff right now, you wanna hear it?' I said, 'Wow, I get to hear stuff from the new one? Cool, man!' And then he played me the whole Mercyful Fate medley down the phone. He said, 'What do you think?' I said, 'Are you kidding?!' This was really, really an amazing take on those songs; it just sounded killer, it was so well done."

How often have you sung the medley with Metallica live onstage?

"I've sung it with them at least three times. Once was in Italy while touring in 1999, and the last time was for their 30th anniversary show in 2011 – that was my first time playing live after my heart surgery! On one occasion, Lars phoned while I was buying a car, asking me if I wanted to do the medley live the next day. So I flew home in that new car, and I ran in and put their version on, because it's different than ours – they have chosen certain verses to play. I can't just say, 'I'm singing a part of this and a part of that.' It's really their own take on it."

"NICK CAVE IS EVIL, WHETHER HE'S TRYING TO BE OR NOT"
JAMES HETFIELD

8. ASTRONOMY (1974)
BLUE ÖYSTER CULT

New York quasi-metal eccentrics Blue Öyster Cult were promoted as the American Sabbath, but their more sensitive charms were evident on monster smash *(Don't Fear) The Reaper*. Bassist Joe Bouchard left the band in 1986, drifting into a nine-to-five life in publishing. Then he heard that Metallica were covering *Astronomy*, a song he'd written for BÖC's third album, 1974's *Secret Treaties*. As a result, he quit his day job and went back to full-time music: "I said to myself, to have this kind of success, that honour of being covered by a famous band, really meant that I should write more songs," Joe told the website Classicbands.com. Since then, he's been involved with projects featuring the likes of original Alice Cooper bassist Dennis Dunaway and Doors guitarist Robby Krieger, and recorded a handful of solo records. "I said, 'This is pretty lucky,'" added Joe. "The Metallica record ended up selling about 5 million copies. So, that's pretty cool." Yep, you could say that, Joe.

Getty Images x2

9. WHISKEY IN THE JAR (1972)

THIN LIZZY

The oldest song on *Garage Inc* by about 300 years, Metallica's arrangement of this trad Irish folk ballad owed everything to Thin Lizzy, whose 1972 version was originally jammed out of desperation after a day of unsuccessful songwriting. Metallica bonded over a shared love of Phil Lynott's Dublin rock pioneers – Lars told *So What!* four other Lizzy songs were in contention – but according to Bob Rock, they liked the idea of honouring the band's overlooked Eric Bell era. "It was one of the most simple ones on the album, because their heart was in it," Bob Rock told AVClub in 2015. "It was really a live performance of [Metallica] playing it, which you hear, the enthusiasm and the excitement." Metallica's version won the band a Grammy, and breathed new life into the 17th-century lyric (helped along by a wild video, set in a raucous, all-female house party).

If you don't know Lizzy, you don't know shit. Jam *Jailbreak* right now

10. TUESDAY'S GONE (1973)

LYNYRD SKYNYRD

The Skynyrd root in 'tallica runs deep. Papa Het said *Sweet Home Alabama* was "the first piece of vinyl I bought with my lawnmower money… I remember thinking, 'Lynyrd Skynyrd, this guy's great.'" Dave Mustaine later cheekily inserted the song's riff into *Seek And Destroy*, while Kirk fondly recalls Cliff's obsession with late Skynyrd guitarist Ed King. "He'd always ask me to show him Skynyrd licks, and then he'd end up saying, 'Man, that's tricky. That's really tricky!'"

Metallica first dusted off this plaintive ballad, from Skynyrd's debut album (*Pronounced 'Lěh-'nérd 'Skin-'nérd*), for an all-acoustic benefit organised by Neil Young in October 1997. A month later, they recorded *Tuesday's Gone* at San Jose radio station KSJO FM, joined by Jerry Cantrell, Pepper Keenan, Jim Martin, Les Claypool and Skynyrd guitarist Gary Rossington. "I always loved that one," James told *So What!* "It's a movin'-on song: you're splitting, you're leaving your woman at home. You're off doing your own thing. It really fits the road."

"LYNYRD SKYNYRD WAS THE FIRST VINYL I BOUGHT"
JAMES HETFIELD

Skynyrd's 'movin'-on song' really spoke to James and co

11. THE MORE I SEE (1982)

DISCHARGE

A 1984 single containing Discharge's most rocking riff, *The More I See* presaged the band's closer involvement with the metal scene. Straddling the line between punk and heavy metal, Metallica had lots of fun with this jam.

TONY 'BONES' ROBERTS

(Discharge guitarist 1977-82, 2001+)

When did you hear that Metallica would be covering Discharge?
"Somebody mentioned to us one day, 'Did you know Metallica have covered two of your songs?' I didn't know anything about it!"

Why do you think so many bands cover Discharge?
"Easy to do, innit?! Ha ha ha! The thing is, out of all the tracks I've ever heard, nobody's ever got it right. It's nearly there, but there's something missing. Nobody has ever recreated it. Even *we* haven't recreated that original sound; it was just a one-off. Lucky day, wasn't it?!"

How close is the bond between Discharge and Metallica?
"I met 'em a few times in the 80s at CBGBs and places like that. They came to watch us somewhere in London a few years ago; they were playing the O2 the day after. They didn't speak to us, but they saw us. They tried to blag a free t-shirt, but the person selling them didn't seem to know who they were, so they didn't get one!"

KING DIAMOND'S *DREAMS OF HORROR*, DIAMOND HEAD'S SELF-TITLED ALBUM AND DISCHARGE'S *END OF DAYS* ARE ALL OUT NOW. METALLICA'S *...AND JUSTICE FOR ALL* REISSUE IS OUT NOW VIA BLACKENED

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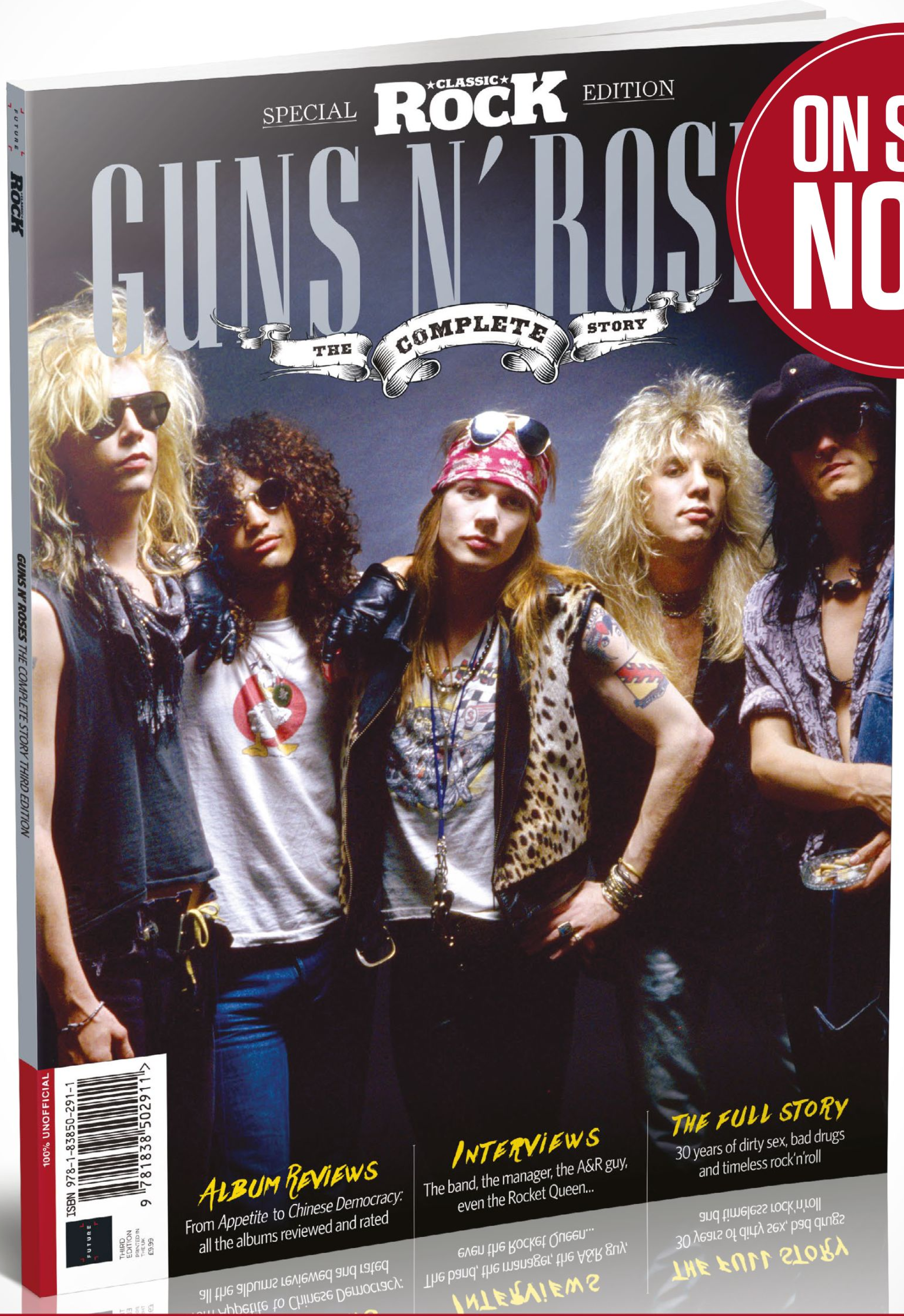
CLASSIC ROCK'S DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO GUNS N' ROSES

Covering the past and continuing adventures of Guns N' Roses, this bookazine from the makers of Classic Rock magazine reveals the true story of the band's hit-making and decade-spanning career by the people who were there



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NO LAUGHING MATTER

Two years ago it was almost all over for the biggest band on the planet. But they managed to drag themselves back from the brink. James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett and Robert Trujillo tell Classic Rock the rehab-to-rebirth story of Metallica. Sandman: Ian Fortnam

Laughing in the face of adversity: Kirk Hammett, James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich and Robert Trujillo are now facing the world with a new, enlightened outlook.

MICK HUTSON/GETTY

YOU ALL KNOW THE DEAL WITH METALLICA: AT PRESENT, THE biggest band on planet – having taken internet file-share giants Napster to the brink of bankruptcy and changed bass players without breaking sweat – are currently enjoying the enormous rewards of yet another international Number One hit album with the brutally uncompromising 'St Anger'. Or at least you think you know the deal.

To their unwaveringly loyal fan base, Metallica ideally define blue-collar metal's strictly defined ideal of manhood: four testosterone-steeped backwoods carnivores, unrefined hell-raisers to a man, who drink, fight, fornicate, invariably grit their teeth at cameras and toy with high-calibre weaponry.

It's a demanding benchmark, but one that the band are almost duty-bound to live up to. After all, it's right there in their job description. Metallica aren't just rock stars, they're heavy metal stars. Consequently, weakness, sensitivity and living their lives at anything less than eleven is simply not an option that's available to them.

At bottom, Metallica are obliged to blaze a trail of abject over-indulgence, because they owe it to the innumerable army of regular Joes who've invested their rock dollar in Metallica product, be it 'Enter Sandman' or a Pushead-designed tour shirt, so that they can live a vicarious life of wickedness-by-association via Metallica.

It's also a hell of a lot of pressure for a band member to bear: plummeting from youth to middle age in a perpetual state of hard-ass causticity, especially when they're trying to raise a family, facing various addictions, are riddled with unresolved control and abandonment issues from their childhood, and work in an industry where Peter Pan Syndrome is not so much the exception as the norm.

And, having taken Metallica to the very brink of extinction, it was just such a set of circumstances that caused Metallica's James Hetfield to drive out the band's former bass player Jason Newsted (14 years in the job but, according to drummer Lars Ulrich, "never really fully accepted as a member"), enter into an eight-month programme of rehab ("a nice little cocoon," the newly chilled and sober James recalls), enlist the assistance of a 'performance therapist' ("positive energy is so important," James's guitar playing associate Kirk Hammett enthuses) and bring the group back together, closer than ever.

So strap yourselves in, because Metallica are about to exhibit their new-found sensitivity.

At the turn of the millennium, Metallica were hoping to enjoy a little well-earned rest and recuperation. The previous summer they had completed a gruelling three-month tour and recorded 'S&M', an ambitious collaborative project with celebrated classical composer Michael Kamen and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra that presented a selection of their best-known recordings rearranged in an orchestral setting.

Then the band's drummer Lars Ulrich hand-delivered a list of 317,377 internet users who, it was claimed, had illegally traded Metallica MP3s via popular internet file-share website Napster, to the company's San Mateo headquarters. Not only were Metallica painted in some quarters as the greed-driven villains of the piece, but they were also ultimately sidelined into soul-sapping litigation for months.

"After 'S&M' we were supposed to have a certain amount of time off," says James Hetfield, from behind a pair of scholarly yet stylish horn-rimmed spectacles. "Then Napster went on forever, especially for Lars. Then, after that we did a few shows and the vibe with Jason started to get really bad."

Metallica's then bassist Jason Newsted, increasingly frustrated with his ongoing status as little more than a marginalized, non-collaborative sideman, was aching to find creative solace elsewhere. Hetfield meanwhile, was having none of it.

"During the last couple of tours he was totally withdrawing from everything," Hetfield says. "Going into his own little world, wearing headphones all the time, never communicating, and we certainly weren't kings of communication, either. We were just four guys who would shut up, play and let the beast roll on."

Newsted finally left the band in January 2001. It was a decision that, surprisingly, proved to have pivotal repercussions for Metallica's surviving members, especially Hetfield.

"When we started playing music after Jason leaving, the music was not all it could have been," he says. "We started to write, and then as we were going deeper into ourselves, and exploring why it was that Jason left – what it meant to us, and all of that – it started stirring up a lot of emotions and a lot of stuff about how we could better ourselves as individuals. So I made the decision to go into rehab."

Do you feel that the experience of going through rehabilitation was something that was essential for the continued existence of Metallica?

"Definitely. And for the continued existence of James Hetfield the person. Things weren't working for me. It affected family life, it affected band life, it affected everything that went on around us."

Is it a healing process that's ongoing?

"Yes, work in progress. It's more like a realisation – mid-life crisis, identity crisis, whatever you want to call it – that the world doesn't revolve around me as the dude in Metallica. That was my identity and my worth. My worth was confused with my mission in life. I've got a lot of new attitudes towards life."

Did growing up in Metallica doom you to lose perspective? After all, the more people treat you as 'the dude from Metallica', the more the real James Hetfield will disappear beneath that.

"Exactly. And not just within the band or on tour, but at home. You'd try to escape that feeling, but no matter where you went you were identified as that guy in Metallica. And, as corny as it sounds, you take that on. You kind of submit to it, and you're signing autographs when you're trying to eat dinner with your kids, or having photos taken when you're on vacation. But you don't have to do that. Any human would say: 'Can you leave me alone for a second.' And in all of that attention, how lonely I was and how lost I was, and in a lot of denial about it. Of course, it happened for a reason, and there's some good things that I take from my past, but I've found a new love for life as me, instead of as the guy in Metallica."

> "I'VE FOUND A NEW LOVE FOR LIFE AS ME, INSTEAD OF AS THE GUY FROM METALLICA." – JAMES

And presumably if you're always surrounded by people expecting and encouraging you to be a rock monster, that will bring out the monstrous side of your personality, and maybe making you more domineering.

"Sure. But that was there for me already. As a kid, intimidation was a great defence for me to not have to get close to people or communicate or express my fears and weaknesses. So going into Metallica as the staunch statue of a frontman, that intimidation factor blossomed and was a great defensive weapon. I could keep people at bay with that, and not state what I actually needed. That's what 'St Anger' really means to me: being able to express anger in a healthy way, instead of just shutting up and being intimidating and then raging out on someone when it all builds up.

"But yeah, the expectations are immense. And I don't have to live up to those expectations. You're out on the street, walking around, and someone wants you to jump around and act like a clown like you do on stage and they start screaming 'No Remorse' at you. But that's not me. I get up there and put on the Metallica coat at times, and while it's a comfortable coat and a part of me that I love expressing, I'm not that way all the time. But when you don't meet their dreams of the person they believe you to be when they finally meet you, it's difficult for them; it almost shatters a dream for them, and then they're disappointed to have met you. And how does that make me feel? It's so difficult for people to understand that the dude's a human, you know, because they've built you up into some kind god-like thing. And it's tough to live up to that."

One of the reasons that Jason left the group – maybe the main reason – was that he wasn't allowed to work outside of Metallica. Do you think that now, with your new attitude from having gone through rehab, he'd have no reason to leave?

"Yeah, that's very true. With my fears of abandonment and control issues, it makes sense that I would do that – that I would try to grip harder to keep the family together, that no one would leave – for fear that they might find something better somewhere else, when initially all he had to do was go jam with some other band and find out that, you know, Metallica is home. You don't know what home is until you leave, and he'd maybe have become more grateful to be in Metallica. That's certainly one ending to that story. But that certainly wasn't the only reason that he left. A lot of other things combined and caused him to escape into a future of his own elsewhere, and search for happiness. And we're all hoping that he finds it."

While it was clearly essential for Hetfield to retreat into an indefinite rehab-bound hiatus following Newsted's eventual resignation, it left Kirk Hammett and Lars Ulrich in a destabilising state of thumb-twiddling limbo, unsure of when, or even if, Metallica's creative hub was going to return. Ulrich latterly admitted that during the last three difficult years he harboured suspicions that "maybe the ride was over", while Hammett was seriously considering his options.

Don't get mad... get therapy: Hetfield admits that his going into rehab was essential if Metallica was going to survive.

ROSS HALFIN

"Lars, [producer] Bob Rock and I had continued getting together for meetings just to keep the faith, keep the momentum going and just keep in touch," Hammett admits, as he sprawls across the sofa in a sumptuous Knightsbridge hotel suite, "because everything was falling apart around us, but we felt that if we held strong and held it together at least we had each other.

"It was a pretty cold realisation that we hadn't heard from James for X amount of time, and I had to think of a back-up plan. I'm the kind of person who always needs back-up plans or, as my therapist says, exits, escape routes. So I sat down and thought about it long and hard, and thought: 'do I have enough things in my life to fill the void if Metallica is gone?' And I discovered that I did. I also asked myself if I would carry on in music, and there was no question – it's what I do. But was I ready for the big drop? And it would have been a drop, right back down to the ground. It would virtually have been like starting over for me. And after realising that I could, it gave me enough confidence to wait things out rather than just panic about the situation that was going on with the band."

Even in the comforting arms of rehab, Hetfield was similarly aware that Metallica were on the very brink of total collapse.

"I think each one of us went through that possibility in our own minds, and what that meant to us," the singer reflects. "And that was a healthy thing – to identify that each one of us as people is more important than Metallica the thing, the machine and the creative force. I certainly went through that in rehab. I completely stripped everything about me to the bone and rebuilt myself as an individual. Growing up in Metallica was all I knew, and I didn't realise how much I was using and manipulating with it.

"But yeah, after Jason left and I went into rehab the other guys certainly spun the wheels in their heads wondering how to control their futures when it wasn't up to them – it wasn't up to any of us, really. But coming to that realisation was important. It made us stronger as individuals, and it gave us real perspective on how much we mean to each other and how much we'd taken each other for granted."

WHEN HETFIELD FINALLY RE-EMERGED from rehab it swiftly became clear that his 'indefinite hiatus' still had time to run. All hopes that work was to resume immediately on writing and recording the material for what was to become 'St Anger' were ultimately dashed on September 12, 2001 when, as Kirk explains: "James sent a message saying that he still needed some more time to sort things out and he had no idea how long that would be".

So the other band members waited. And they waited some more.

"It was a long time coming," resumes Hammett. "After we hadn't heard from him for six weeks or so, Lars and I were driving each other loony speculating on what he was doing and why we hadn't heard from him and what was going on in his head. In the meantime, friends would come up to us and say: 'I ran into James at the mall. Damn, he looks good'. And we're like, what is this – friends of the band are seeing James, and we're left in this holding pattern? That continued through the whole of September and October until the third week of November.

"My wife had a surprise party for me, and I saw this guy standing in the corner, casting a familiar shadow. And it was James. I was so glad to fucking see him, and I could instantly see from looking into his eyes that there was a new clarity there, a new awareness and a new sensitivity that I didn't detect before. It was totally amazing. We were able to exchange a few words, and I was able to make sure for myself that he was okay and functioning on a somewhat sane level. But he told me: 'You know, it's still going to be some time.'

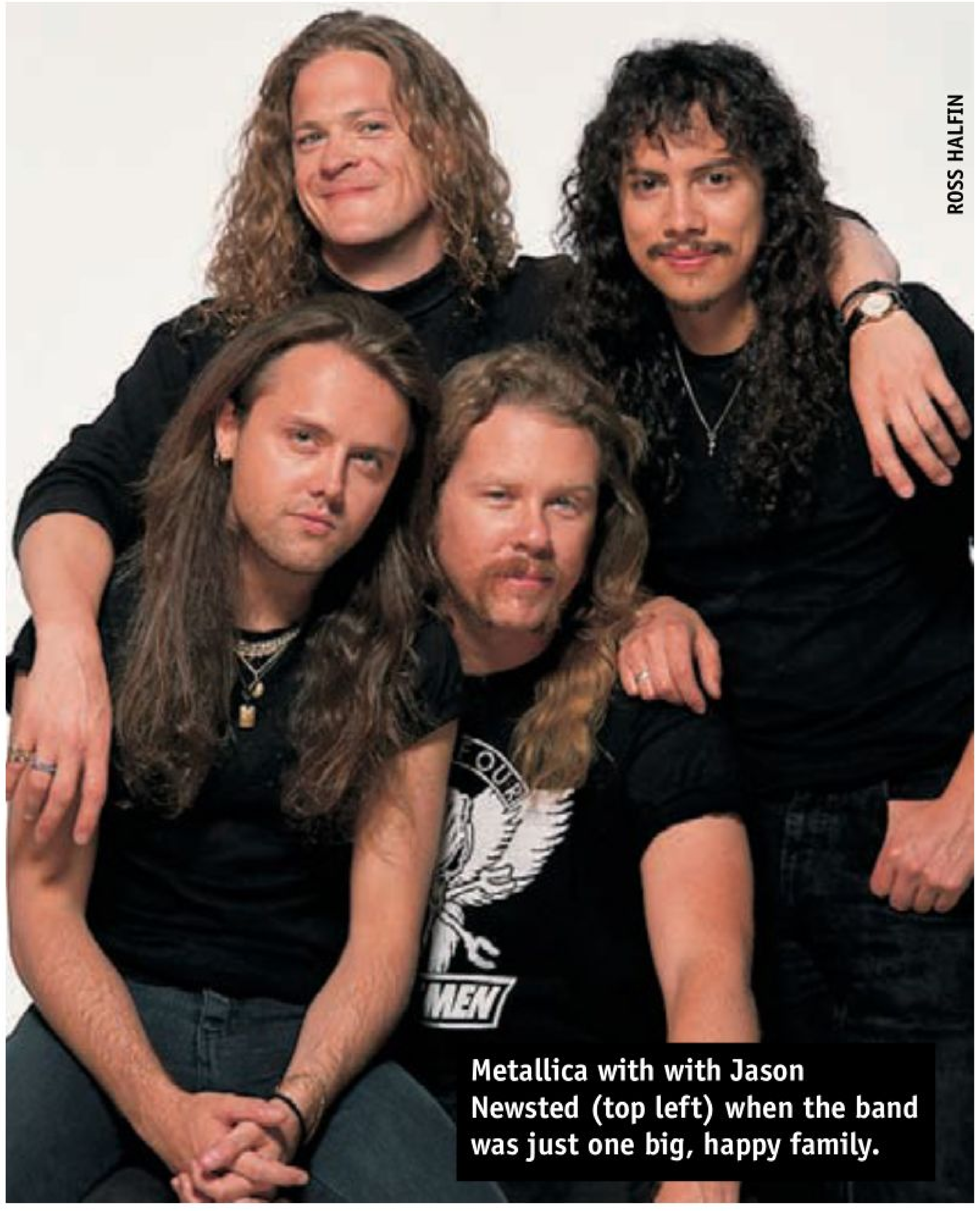
"So we actually didn't start hooking up until March, and only then did we start having meetings and reconnecting with each other. But that was the adjustment period that we had to go through to adjust to the new James Hetfield. And it was just as much of an adjustment for him to us."

So how did it actually feel for the post-rehab James on the first occasion that Metallica reconvened at their San Francisco HQ studio complex in Spring 2002?

"Very scary," Hetfield admits. "Any of the firsts in sobriety are scary – just leaving rehab was scary. Going through some absolutely cathartic experiences in seven weeks there, and elsewhere up to a total of three months, and then coming out into the world was scary. You were in a nice little cocoon of safety there, so you can tear down and rebuild. But, oh boy, coming out was scary: 'What should I do? What should I not do? Where should I go? Uh, I don't want to go in here, because something might trigger me into this and that.' You know, the fear of just living was with me for a little while. So coming right back into the band, it just didn't work. And it was hard to explain to them how it wasn't time yet. I needed time to adjust to the world. I couldn't just come and plug in, because every time we plugged in and started playing together it was like a security blanket; the world went away and everything was fine. It was a safety zone. And I didn't want to forget about all the other stuff that had to happen, like me explaining to them what I need; how it's different for me and how the dynamic has changed; and how we're not going to be going on two-year tours any more; my family is important to me, I can't let my children grow up without me; and all the other priorities, how they lined up in my life. And it's become contagious, you know. That stuff spread within the band, and we all started taking a look at ourselves and becoming a lot more respectful of each other and our needs."

Was the new, sober and grounded James Hetfield a stranger?

"Totally, I had to reintroduce myself to those guys and they didn't know what to think… To them, to my wife, to everybody."



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Metallica with with Jason Newsted (top left) when the band was just one big, happy family.

"EVERYTHING WAS FALLING APART, BUT IF WE HELD STRONG AT LEAST WE HAD EACH OTHER." – KIRK

And to yourself?

"Totally to myself: 'Is this me talking? Man, I'm not even thinking about what I'm saying and all this shit's coming out. And it feels right, it feels okay.'

"But yeah, there was a whole dynamic change that had to happen within the group. And certain things had to shift… One person changes and everyone else around them, all relationships, friends, everything changed."

One of the most obvious changes in the Metallica's modus operandi is their forthright embrace of a new creative democracy, where all band members are created equal and come into the rehearsal studio with nothing – no riffs, no beats, no lyrics; in fact, no preconceptions whatsoever – and write together as a unit, organically.

There's a lot of talk within the band of taking things back to their roots – of four guys sweating over their instruments, in an honest, old-school fashion. But in an unguarded moment Hammett reveals that when the group's new bassist – former Ozzy Osbourne sideman Rob Trujillo – was learning the 'St Anger' material in order to appear on the album's accompanying DVD (producer Bob Rock took care of the bass playing on the record itself) "he wasn't the only one learning the songs".

"Because of the way the songs were put together," Hammett continues, "we would jam, then everything would go into ProTools [music production computer software], and we would just move stuff around until we had a song. Then we would work on the song, and once it was done we'd have a nice little ditty on our hands. But we never actually played the songs together as a band."

This may go some way to explain the dizzying complexity on 'St Anger' and its tendency toward jarring disjointedness. But it's a method of working the newly democratic Metallica intend to stick with, as it seems to suit their new-found creative democracy to a tee.

But hang on a minute. Wasn't a distinct lack of creative democracy the very motivation for Jason Newsted to leave Metallica in the first place?

"Absolutely," Ulrich concurs. "Jason was overlooked. And the ironic thing is that the model for what would have been the perfect Metallica in Jason's mind is the one that exists now. That is kind of ironic. It's also a little sad, because Jason's a good guy and he put a lot of effort into the band for many years, and in retrospect he was never really fully accepted into the band. Then when he tried to go elsewhere to satisfy his creative needs, he was told – well, barked at – that he couldn't. He was caught in no man's land. So in a way he sacrificed himself – or had to be sacrificed – in order for us to be able to move to the place we're at now. So it's ironic, and really sad. For me, it's amazing that it lasted for 14 years, that Jason stuck it out for that long."

Why do you think James insisted that Jason never worked outside Metallica?

"That would be called control issues," Lars continues. "James has his vision of the perfect family, and it's almost kind of mafia-style: you're part of the family, and if you step outside of the family you're betraying the family, and you'll get

MICK HUTSON/GETTY

Hetfield with The New Guy: former Ozzy bassist, Robert Trujillo.

GETTY

ostracised. And that is at the heart of a lot of the stuff that we've tried to work through in the last couple of years."

Asked whether they think that the post-rehab James would make similar demands, Hammett states assertively: "Absolutely not. I think James has seen the error of his ways, and post-rehab James Hetfield is diametrically different to pre-rehab James Hetfield. Whenever Jason did outside projects, James got a feeling of abandonment. And that's something that's very deeply rooted in his history – mine as well. Jason doing things outside woke up those feelings and abandonment issues inside James, and at that point, pre-rehab, he wasn't equipped to deal with it. Same thing with myself. I wasn't really equipped to deal with a lot of things, either. And I think that if Jason had just stuck it out for two or three more days rather than coming to that one meeting [the first with Dr Phil Towle, band therapist, see page 74] and saying: 'I'm out of here, no questions asked', things would have been a lot different in the band."

"I think that there's a thread from James Hetfield treating Jason like that, and realising his mistakes and going into rehab," Ulrich adds. "Not necessarily an obvious, direct correlation, but there is definitely a link in there somewhere. In some sub-conscious way, something happened."

"It's like James had a problem processing a lot of the thoughts and feelings he had," Hammett continues. "And Jason leaving was one of the feelings he had trouble processing. It's been a huge learning experience, and something that Jason set in motion for all of us. He was the sacrificial lamb for our spiritual and mental growth as well as our creative growth, and it just sucks. It's medieval."

"ON 'KILL 'EM ALL' WE WERE VERY ANGRY YOUNG MEN. NOW WE'RE VERY ANGRY MIDDLE-AGED MEN."

– KIRK

YOU COULD INTERPRET 'ST ANGER' AS THE RAGE-DRIVEN soundtrack to three years of pivotal and cathartic therapy (or as Metallica's marketing director told Hammett: "a fucking commercial disaster"). So where exactly does all of this unfettered fury actually come from? After all, from all outward appearances Metallica seem to be enjoying the most comfortable existence currently available to modern man.

"It's deep-seated anger that's deep within our personalities," Hammett says, frowning. "In the last two years we've been exploring our inner personalities and discovering that there's a lot of fucking residual anger there that came from our childhoods, and it's something that fame, money and celebrity is not an antidote for. It's a deep-seated anger that's always been there. On 'Kill 'Em All' we were very angry young men, and now we're very angry middle-aged men. What happened in our childhoods is part of our mental foundation, and tapping into it in a positive way is something we've found out how to do in the last two years. And that is the sound of 'St Anger'."

But having put all of that cathartic aggression into 'St Anger', isn't there a danger that when you reconvene to make the next album you'll discover that the well has run dry and you're now four perfectly balanced individuals who are utterly unable to create?

"I can see how someone could get caught up in that fear of running out of creative juice," considers Hetfield, "but I truly don't believe that. Music was a great gift for me, and I discovered that somewhat early. But I don't need alcohol, I don't need anger, I don't need serenity, I don't need any of those things to be creative."

So what's filling the gaps left by the alcohol, the anger and all the darker facets of Hetfield's personality that he has discarded along the way?

"Life," he says succinctly. "I've been trying to dump everything else – sex, drugs, rock'n'roll… chocolate's a real struggle these days – or work. You know, in rehab I saw it all: people taking certain behaviours to extremes, to where it becomes an addiction; compulsive activity that just started to ruin their lives. Anything can really be taken to that extreme. But I'm comfortable with the unknown right now, and trusting of it, so life is filling that hole. Life on life's terms is okay for me."

When people survive crises together, it very often bonds them together in a special way. Has that happened with Metallica – have the last three tumultuous years made them a stronger band?

"Oh, absolutely," Hammett enthuses, "This is the healthiest Metallica has ever been. I think we've another strong ten years in us. And to be where we're at right now, with all of us able to look into each other's eyes and say: 'I love you, bro', that's a fucking special thing. The mood in the band reminds me of when I first joined 20 years ago. When I first joined the band there was a huge infusion of new energy. Up until Cliff [Burton, Metallica's original bassist, who was killed when the band's tour bus over-turned in 1986] died we were just so psyched about everything and life in general. But that kind of ended when Cliff left.

"But I have to say, the future looks so great I have to put sunglasses on. I sense a feeling of brotherhood between all four of us again. It's been a long time coming, and it feels great. We went through the meat grinder, but we're still together and not just a fucking quivering piece of hamburger in the corner. It's always darkest before the dawn."

"No doubt about it," a heroically fit James Hetfield concurs, "I've gone through life trying to avoid struggles, either drink them away or hide from them, but being able to face them and take them on knowing that you are going to grow after you've walked through the fire and be okay, all of these things that we have been talking about have made us stronger as people and as a band. We've gravitated towards each other and realised the gratitude that we have for being alive and for being in Metallica." ■

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Metallica Now

"We all want to be like U2. But we're too dorky..."

...and they're back. With *Death Magnetic*, Metallica return to their roots.

WORDS: GEOFF BARTON **PICTURES:** ROSS HALFIN

With another successful tour of Europe's summer festivals under their belts, and with new album *Death Magnetic* in the shops, Metallica are back in business again – and virtually unrecognisable from the dysfunctional bunch heard on the album *St Anger* and depicted in the movie *Some Kind Of Monster*. *Classic Rock* plays catch-up with all four Metalli-members: singer/guitarist James Hetfield, guitarist Kirk Hammett, bassist Robert Trujillo and drummer Lars Ulrich.

***Classic Rock* had to jump through plenty of hoops to get this interview organised. It seems like the bigger a band becomes, the more barriers are put in your way. Is this the case with Metallica?**
Lars Ulrich: I was talking to my friend Robb [Machine Head] Flynn the other day and he said something that really surprised me. Robb said he had a friend who wanted to interview me – this young metal kid. "He thinks you're an unapproachable rock monster," Robb told me, "and I'd really like for him to see the side of you that I see." Well, I'll take an hour out of my day to do an interview with anyone who thinks I'm a rock monster. It just isn't true. Most people who come into contact with Metallica say: "You guys are so normal and nice." Of course we are. We're just a friendly neighbourhood rock band. We've never been guarded.

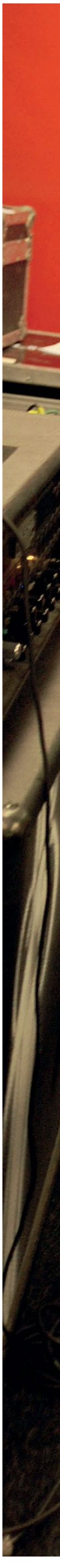
In a recent Metallica article in another music mag, you [Ulrich] were called a 'European sophisticate' with a penchant for vintage champagne and private planes. Are you trying to develop an upmarket image for Metallica?
Ulrich: Me, a European sophisticate? If I am, that doesn't say too much about the rest of them.
James Hetfield: Lars's millions? Ha-ha! I really don't think about it. We're not focused on questions like: "What fan-base are you going for?" There might be other people in the Metallica machine who are, but I'm certainly not. We're going to be ourselves wherever we go. It also depends on the interview. If you're sitting with the BBC or the *New York Times* centre-section, you're going to get deeper questions, you're going to get something that demands a little more thought.
Ulrich: There always has to be a story about James – the hotdog-eating, red-blooded American conservative – against me, the diminutive, motormouth, art-collecting Dane. It's fine. The main difference between now and back in the day is that now it's more comical, whereas 10 years ago it used to wind you up a little bit.

Describe how it was working with Rick Rubin on *Death Magnetic*.
Ulrich: Rick kept telling us: "Think like you used to think in 1985. Approach it like you did in 1985. Listen to the same records you did in 1985." Everything was about transporting yourself back to 1985.

Rubin was obviously encouraging a back-to-basics approach.
Hetfield: Without completely going silly and trying to relive the mid 80s, yes, I think we've gotten exactly what we were out to accomplish. So far I'm liking *Death Magnetic*. A lot. There's a few songs on there that I just can't stop playing. *Unforgiven III* is one of those. I may be sappy, but I like the kinda epic-y ballad, you know? I fall for it every time. It was important to make a diverse album this time around. I love the diversity of [1984 album] *Ride The Lightning* in particular. You were able to feel all the different moods of Metallica on that record.

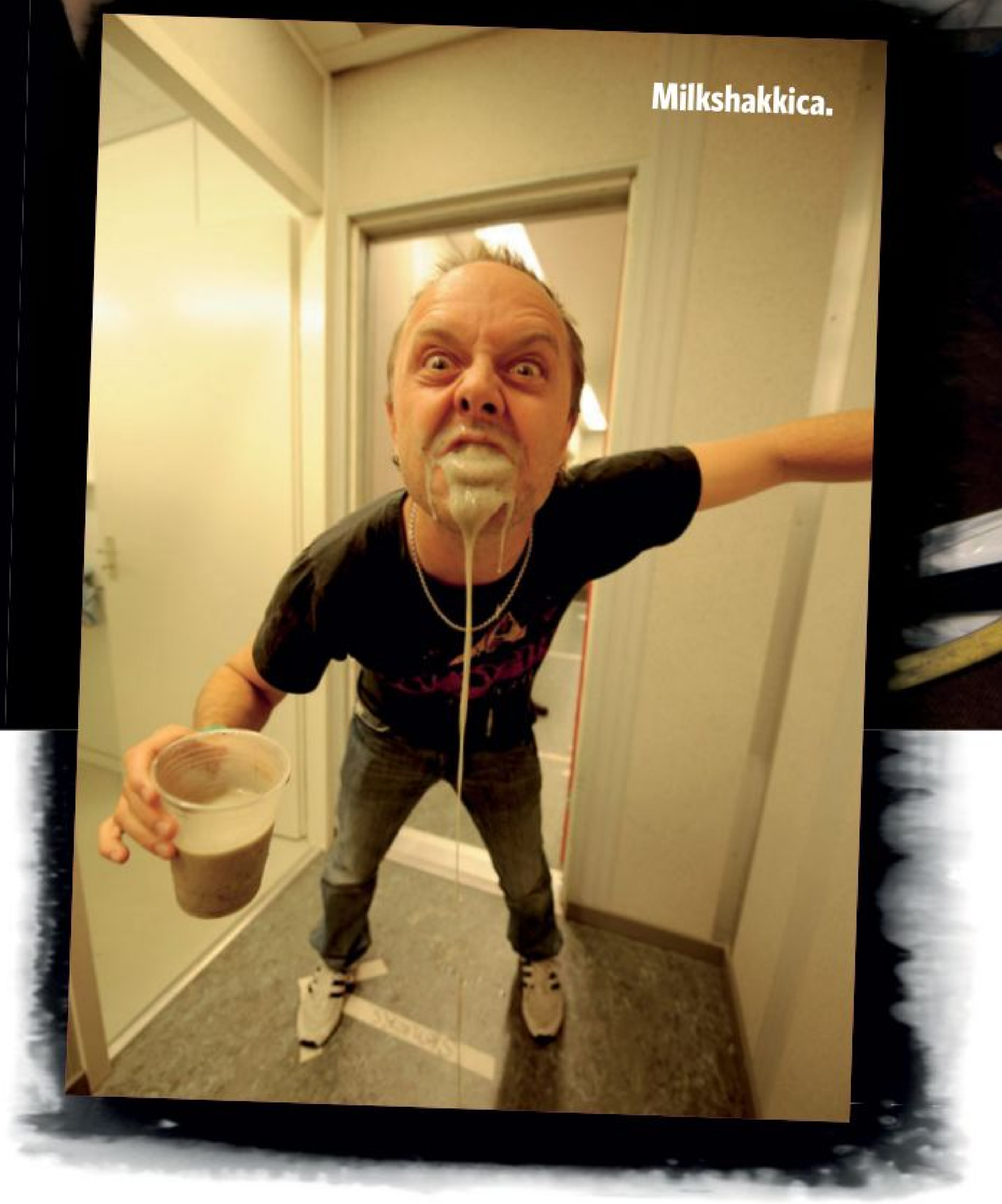
How easy was it for you to cast your minds back to Metallica's early days?
Ulrich: I think it was a little bit easier for me than it was for James. He still has one foot in some of the dark stuff he was carrying around. But James still speaks very fondly of the old days. There was a thrash-metal special from [*Classic Rock* sister magazine] *Metal Hammer* that came out a month or two ago with James on the cover, and we all sat on the plane reading it. Suddenly James went: "This is amazing, we should do a reunion of all the old Bay Area thrash bands." I thought: "Wow, he's really feeling that." So yes, James carries around this dark stuff but I always love it when the kid comes out again. Because that was the kid I first met and that was the guy I fell in love with. And when he shows up it's so much fun.
Kirk Hammett: Recording *Death Magnetic* was a very, very cool experience. There was hardly any fighting at all. Plus, it feels good to play guitar solos again. People have been asking me: "Does this mean Kirk Hammett is back?" I suppose that's true in a way. During *St Anger* I was as busy as I've ever been in the studio but a lot of it was to do with trying to maintain the sanity of the band. If there were guitar solos on that album I would probably have been a nervous wreck doing them, because there wasn't really much time to work on something equally as stressful.

We hear the spirit of Ritchie Blackmore loomed large on *Death Magnetic*...
Hammett: Yeah, I listened to quite a bit of Rainbow and Deep Purple when it came to start laying down the lead tracks. To get the inspiration up, because that's the stuff I used to listen to when I was a teenager. Ritchie Blackmore is one of the



Hetfield: "I may be sappy… but I like the epic ballad."

"After the climbing frame, we can go on those swings."



Milkshakkica.

most brilliant guitar players out there, ever. I used to be obsessed by the guitar solo on Purple's *Highway Star*. I spent hours trying to play that solo. Plus the Rainbow stuff is just off the chart when it comes to technique and great playing.

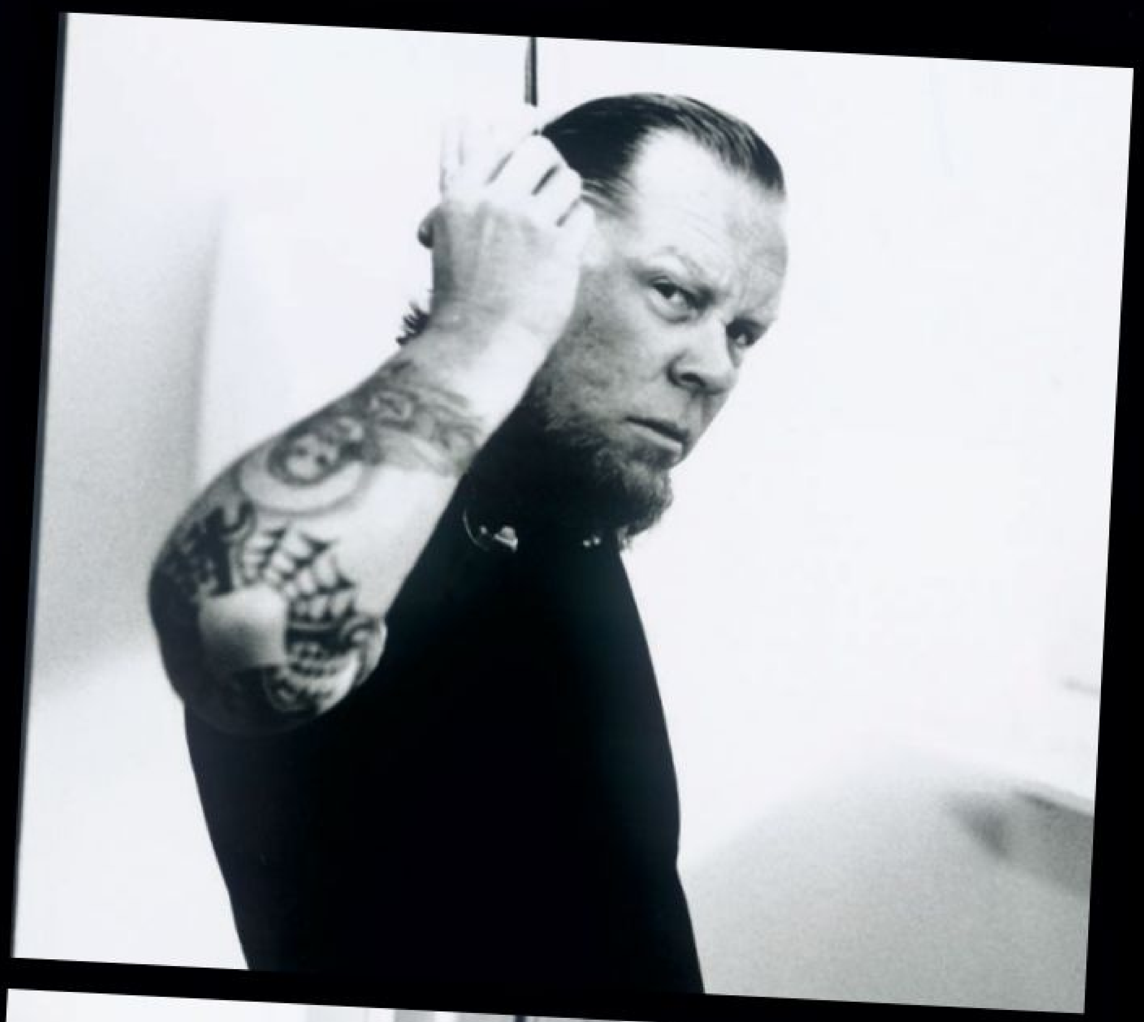
What is your relationship like with your former producer, Bob Rock?
Ulrich: Increasingly over the last few projects with Bob, God bless him, every major task ended up as a compromise between me and James. I think if you interviewed Bob right now he would tell you that he probably didn't have any more to offer Metallica anyway. I've played the new record to Bob and I was glad to do that. So that's all been dealt with. There are no new issues here.
Hetfield: *St Anger* was the near-death experience of Metallica. We had to get in a new producer for the band's long-term health.
Ulrich: Rick Rubin is not a musician like Bob Rock is. Rick has absolutely no technical expertise whatsoever. He only just about knows how to text and send an email. What Rick does, he fits the classic phrase 'A&R guy'. He's a set of ears. He sits down, listens to your music and says: "That's great, that could be better, that doesn't work." What he doesn't do is sit there and go: "Try F-sharp after G and one more dB at 10k."
Hetfield: "Working with Bob Rock and then Rick Rubin is about as black and white as you can get. Bob fully immerses himself into the project. Bob is involved in every note, every decision, every sound. He has the schedule, he's got the agenda for the day. He's cracking the whip, yelling at Kirk: "You didn't do your homework!" He's working with me on the vocals and the lyrics. He's the referee when Lars and me start fighting, ha-ha! Whereas Rick Rubin… he's opposite. Very, very opposite. He just wants to hear a good song.

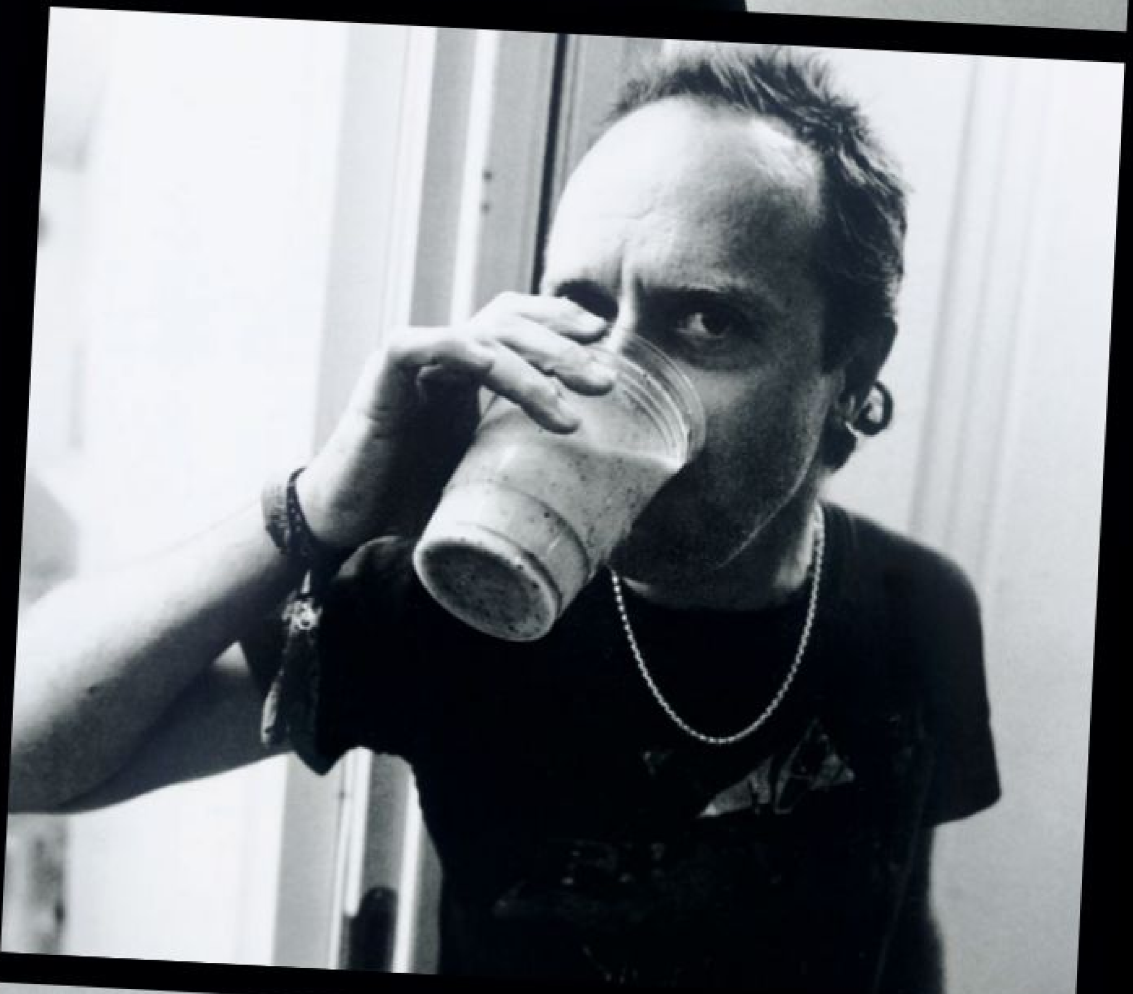
> "Rick Rubin kept telling us 'Think like you did in 1985.'"
> – Lars Ulrich

Following the departure of Jason Newsted, Bob Rock played bass on *St Anger*. With Robert Trujillo on board for *Death Magnetic*, how much difference did that make?
Ulrich: Jason gave a lot to this band but his personality got a little rough sometimes because he was so serious. Rob's been in the band longer than Cliff [Burton, Metallica's fondly remembered second bassist after Ron McGovney] and coming up to half as long as Jason. The word 'effortless' is the word that always comes to mind. It's the easiest way to describe Rob. As both a personality and musician, he's effortless.
Robert Trujillo: James was very fragile when I first joined the band. He was just coming out of his whole trip, going through his transition from the old James to the new James. Now it's like he's got his ju-ju back and that really shows in his dedication to this new album.

Of course, if Hetfield and Ulrich ever started fighting again, you could very easily step in and separate them. You are, after all, a very, very, very big guy.
Trujillo: I would certainly try my best.
Hetfield: Ha-ha! Yeah, Rob could step in if he wanted to. That's something that Lars probably feels good about. But when things go down it doesn't matter about size or shape. When things snap, they snap. When Rob was a member of Suicidal Tendencies I watched him and [singer] Mike Muir on stage plenty of times. I used to think, "Holy shit, I wouldn't want to get in an alley with them. They're big, tough-looking dudes." But Rob is a sweetheart, he's an amazing personality and he's completely willing to step up to any challenge.

To an outsider, the build-up to the release of *Death Magnetic* appears to have been planned with military precision.
Hetfield: The rationing of knowledge about the album? Yeah, we keep getting that a lot: "What's the big secret?" And it's so interesting to hear that, because for us there's not many secrets in Metallica – especially after *Some Kind Of Monster*, of course. Obviously in this day and age the leaking of information is crucial,





James hard at work in the studio. Left: 'Tallica monkey business.

Lars and Barton discuss Blitzkrieg outtakes.

it can make or break a band, and it has very big consequences, especially in a band like us that has got a lot of mouths to feed.
Ulrich: Maybe in the metal world people look to us and think: 'Those guys have got it together.' But it's not something we think about a lot ourselves. In terms of the way modern bands would like operate, we all want to be like U2. Everybody has a perception that U2 is the most together organisation. There isn't a day that goes by where I don't think, 'this is amateur hour'. We are so dorky and so many little details go wrong. We go: "Doh! I bet that doesn't happen to U2!"

Do you regret making *Some Kind Of Monster*?
Hetfield: No. That movie was the best mirror I've ever had. There were a lot of times where I saw myself as I did not want to see myself. "Oh-oh – there's the brat slamming the door when he didn't get his way; there's the 10-year-old kid with abandonment issues or whatever…" Not to completely play Freud but a lot of it had to do with us not knowing ourselves. We've grown up in a rock'n'roll environment, and that's a difficult situation for anyone to grow up in. Lars and me realised how much we need each other instead of how much we hate each other. In embracing our differences, as corny as that sounds, I think the major revelation was: "He's not doing it to fuck with me." He's doing it because he thinks it's right. And vice versa. So when we defused the 'taking it personal' bomb, that's when it became a little more of… us against the world again.

"The fights in my life aren't with James – they're with my kids."
– Lars Ulrich

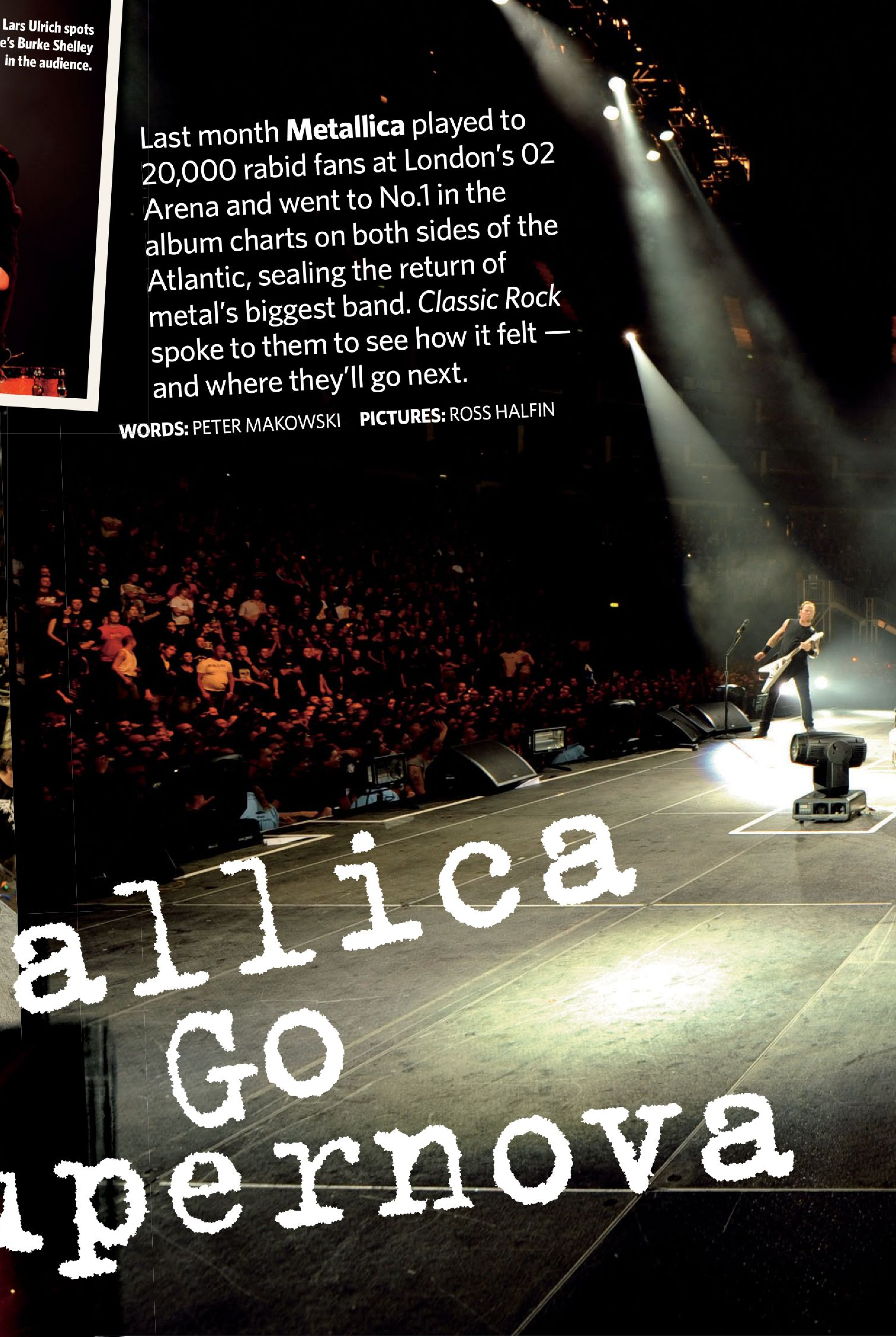
So why foist *Some Kind Of Monster* on the public at large? Why not keep it for Metallica's own private consumption?
Hetfield: We were viewed as distant and unfeeling after the Napster thing, so it was important that we showed the world that we do have a human side. I'm sure there was also a part of it that felt like: "No one's ever done this before." The other part was possibly connecting with other bands that have gone through a similar struggle.

With 10 kids between the four members, Metallica are a family affair these days. How have your priorities changed?
Ulrich: The fights in my life are not with James Hetfield, the fights in my life are with my kids about learning to say fuckin' please or finish their fuckin' vegetables or get the fuck to bed on time. I can't be all things to all people any more. I'm 44 years old and I have to take care of three beautiful kids and [wife] Connie and do my best to get on with James Hetfield, Kirk Hammett and Robert Trujillo. Those are my responsibilities.

Do you ever hanker after the days when all you had to do was hand in a tape of your new album to the record company?
Hetfield: It might be fun to be simple again. Every now and then we go and play a club gig and it *is* simple. But these days, when you play a new song live, you know within hours it'll be on YouTube. It's unfortunate that we have to hold back information and release it when it's most impactful. There are no secrets with Metallica but sometimes we do have to limit the amount of knowledge going out there.

You only played one song from *Death Magnetic* – *Cyanide* – on your recent tour of Europe's summer festivals. Is there any danger of Metallica becoming a heritage band?
Hammett: That's the fast-track to stagnation. It's easy but I don't know how much fun it can be at the end of the day. It would drive me crazy."
Hetfield: Pushing the new songs live is the key to an evergreen Metallica. *Death Magnetic* is Metallica's ninth album, which I find unbelievable. Most bands hit their ninth record in maybe their 12th or 13th year of being together. We've been together 27 years. We're slow. Metallica's clock is very slow. Until we get on stage. Then it's very fast!

Lars Ulrich spots Budgie's Burke Shelley in the audience.

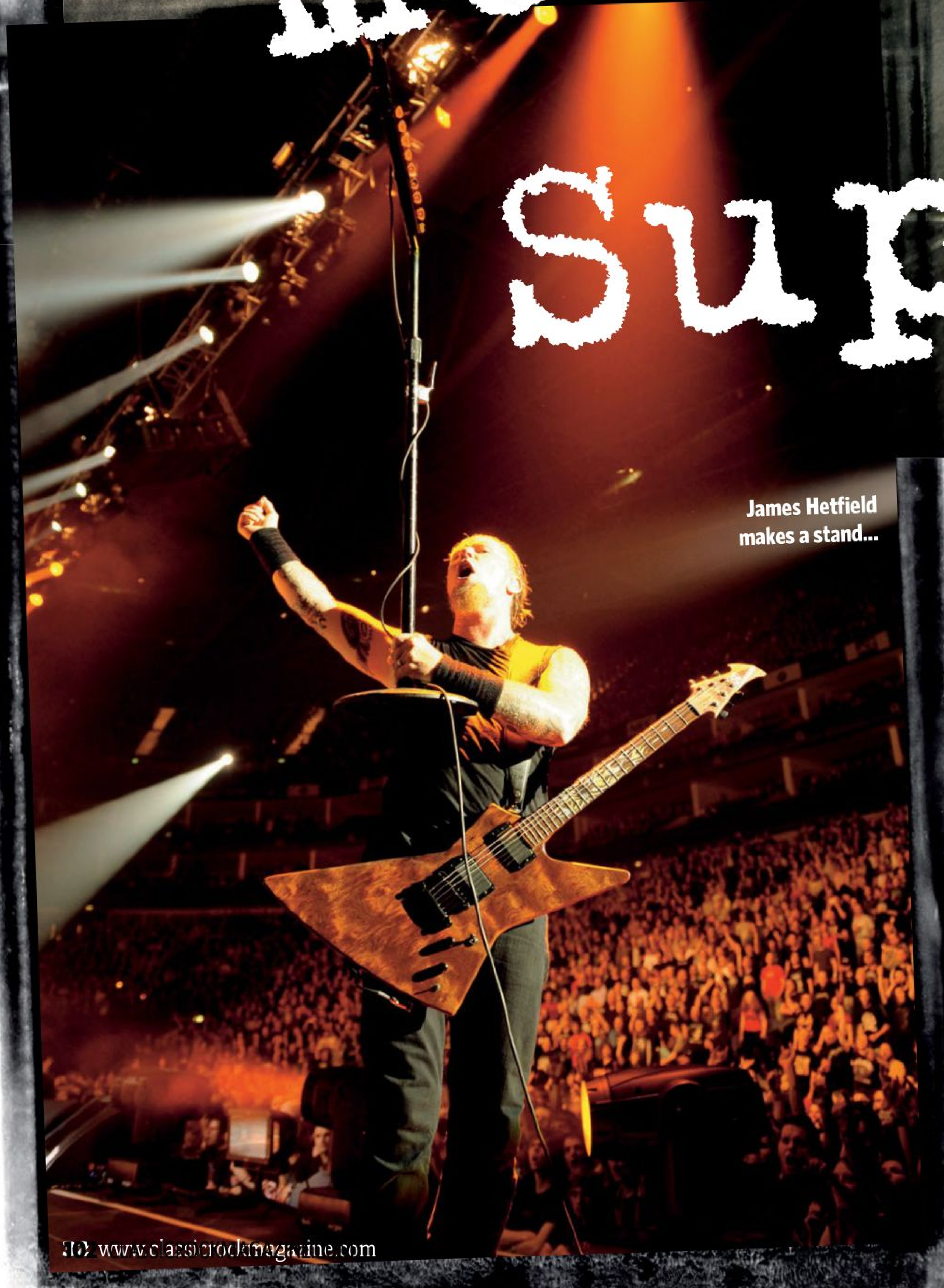


Last month **Metallica** played to 20,000 rabid fans at London's O2 Arena and went to No.1 in the album charts on both sides of the Atlantic, sealing the return of metal's biggest band. *Classic Rock* spoke to them to see how it felt — and where they'll go next.

WORDS: PETER MAKOWSKI **PICTURES:** ROSS HALFIN

Kirk Hammett: joining the digit-al revolution.

Metallica Go Supernova



James Hetfield makes a stand...

On Monday, September 15, while Planet Earth plunged further into financial insecurities and general woe, Metallica joined rock's superleague – a world inhabited by a select few living legends such as Led Zeppelin and Metalli-drummer Lars Ulrich's beloved U2.

That morning Metallica beat Glaswegian shoegazers Glasvegas to the coveted No.1 spot in the album charts with their much-anticipated comeback album, *Death Magnetic*. It was a feat duplicated around the world as the album went straight to the top in Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey.

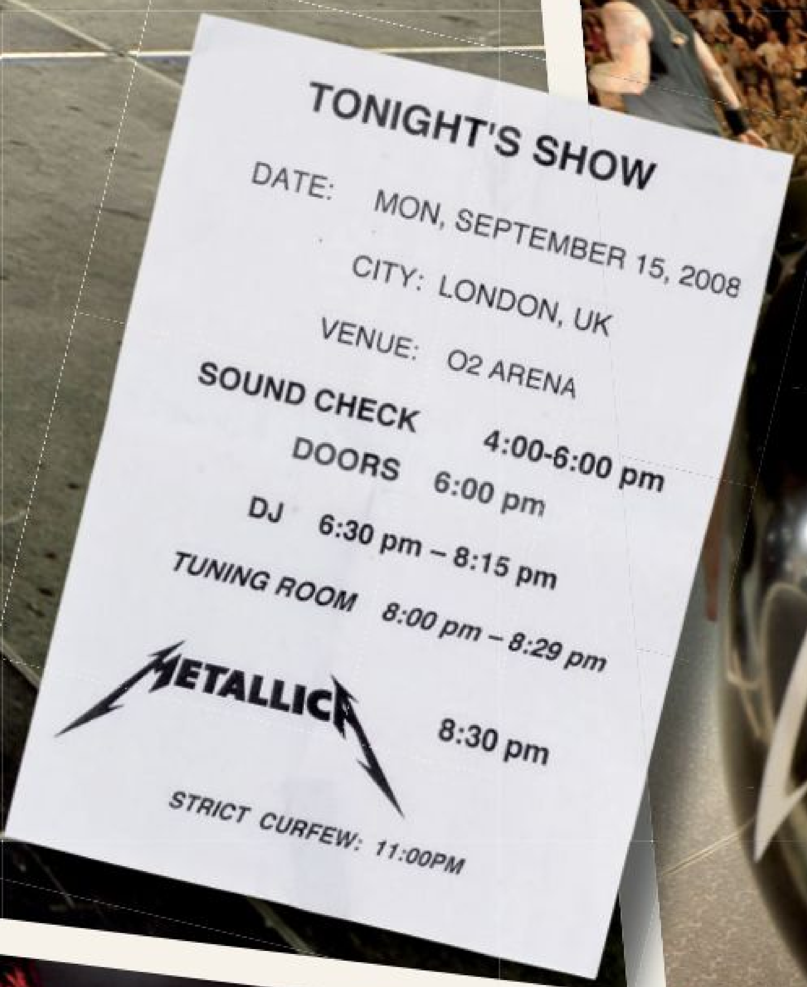
The best-selling album in the US and Europe, Stateside *Death Magnetic* entered the *Billboard* Top 200 album chart at No. 1, making Metallica the only band in the chart's history to have five albums debut at the top (1991's *Metallica* – known as The Black Album – 1996's *Load*, 1997's *ReLoad*, and 2003's *St. Anger*).

"When you're 27 years into your career the fact that anybody gives a shit enough to buy your record in itself is pretty amazing," a cheerful Lars Ulrich told *Classic Rock* later that day. And was it sweeter beating a band of bright young things like Glasvegas? "I haven't even heard of Glasvegas," Ulrich chuckled, "but obviously the *NME* speak very highly of them."

"Yeah, I have no idea who Glasvegas are," said guitarist Kirk Hammett. "They must be

Lean and mean.

Metallica space hoppers: order now for Christmas.


TONIGHT'S SHOW

DATE: MON, SEPTEMBER 15, 2008
CITY: LONDON, UK
VENUE: O2 ARENA
SOUND CHECK 4:00-6:00 pm
DOORS 6:00 pm
DJ 6:30 pm – 8:15 pm
TUNING ROOM 8:00 pm – 8:29 pm
METALLICA 8:30 pm
STRICT CURFEW: 11:00PM

Rob Trujillo: the Jaco Pastorius of metal.

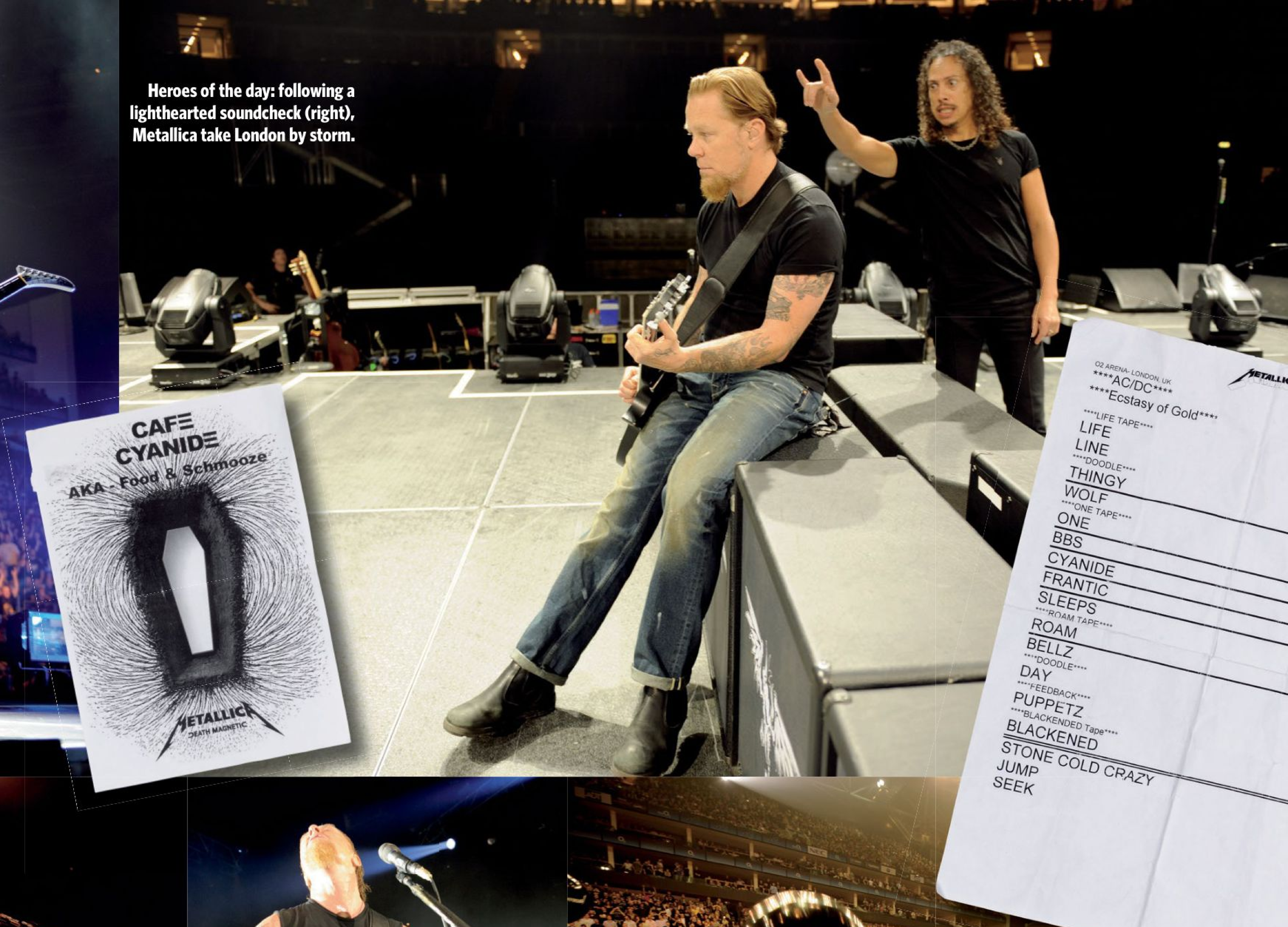
a wonderful band if everyone is expecting them to get the top spot. But you know what? Metal rules, bro'!"

If the metal community sometimes feels ignored by the mainstream press, the return of Metallica was yet further evidence that the stereotype of the denim-and-leather-clad metalhead is long out of date. The band featured in a special programme by BBC2's arts vehicle *The Culture Show*, and *Death Magnetic* received rave reviews in the broadsheets ('Bar a couple of downbeat moments,' said *The Times*, 'these songs have a ferocious energy that recalls the band's *Master Of Puppets*.' 'The best metal album of the millennium so far,' commented the *Daily Telegraph*. 'Death becomes them,' said *The Observer*).

Metallica also pioneered new techniques to build up enthusiasm for the record. Months before *Death Magnetic* hit stores, the band launched a new website – missionmetallica.com – offering users a glimpse into the making of the album via a treasure trove of all-new content, fly-on-the-wall video footage and excerpts of new songs. In total, Metallica posted 350 minutes of exclusive footage that reached nearly 10 million people across 161 countries. The day before its release they streamed *Death Magnetic* for fan club and Mission Metallica members, allowing hard-core fans to hear the album before anyone else and creating positive word-of-mouth among their fans. On top of that, Metallica interacted directly with fans who posted clips of themselves performing Metallica songs on YouTube. Drummer Lars Ulrich viewed fan-generated clips and posted a video to personally express his appreciation. At the time of going to press, Ulrich's clip had already been viewed 1.2 million times.

The band also set a record for having the most radio stations in history sign up for an exclusive FMQB broadcast of *The World Premiere Of Death Magnetic*. The programme – hosted by the Foo Fighters' Dave Grohl and Taylor Hawkins, and featuring all four members of Metallica – was heard on more than 175 stations across the US and Canada.

Metallica have broken almost every rule in the book – they've 'sold out', played with orchestras, fought Napster, appeared to chase the nu-metal dollar with *St. Anger*, aired their dirty laundry with *Some Kind Of Monster* – and seem to have not only got away with it, but have become more successful in the process. Any theories as to why it's worked for them? "I wish I knew," says Brian Tatler,



Heroes of the day: following a lighthearted soundcheck (right), Metallica take London by storm.

guitarist and frontman with Lars Ulrich's favourite band, Diamond Head. The composer of popular Metallica live staple *Am I Evil?*, Tatler is quite an authority on the band, having seen them over 26 times. "Everything is very well managed. Lars is at the hub of all the decisions. Yeah, they've made a few mistakes along the way, but compared to other bands it's been a nice, gentle rise to the top. I think that they love being on the road and they go the extra mile to come to your town. They go to every corner of the globe and make sure you know about it."

Metallica's gig at London's 02 was possibly the largest album launch/fan-club convention of all time. Tickets were only available to the band's fan-club members, and those people who subscribed to www.missionmetallica.com, priced £5 with all ticket proceeds donated to charity. The event was living proof of why *The Independent On Sunday* claimed that 'a Metallica gig is male bonding in excelsis!' In an era filled with turmoil, here is a band that has survived and still seriously kicks ass.

"Metallica just get better and better," says Tatler. "I was just pleased that they did a different set. It was nice to hear some new material and a couple of old favourites. Things like *Wherever I May Roam* and of course the encores: *Stone Cold Crazy*, *Jump In The Fire*, *Seek And Destroy*. I didn't miss the obvious songs like *Enter Sandman*, *Nothing Else Matters* or *Creeping Death*. It was a set for the Metallica fans to remember."

Wherever he may roam: Kirk tears it up, in-the-round style.

The band were still reeling from the reception at the 02 gig when *Classic Rock* spoke to them afterwards. "I want to take the venue, the crowd and the stage on tour with me," said Lars. "Just do that every night for the next year."

Kirk put the band's attitude on the night down to the album's success: "Everyone was enthusiastic and in a great mood because of the No.1. I really felt that translated into the performance. And it was great to have played new songs and not have to play the festival set we've been doing for the last three years, which was no more than – and I hate to say this – a greatest-hits set."

"That was the second in-the-round performance we've done for something like four years," says relative new boy, bassist Rob Trujillo. "It's more difficult for the techs than it is for us. We're having fun while they have to do the cues for the sound. We really liked that stage and we're probably going to go for the same set-up in the States."

What was it like playing the new material?

Kirk: "It's strange, we were talking about that after the show. We played five new songs and already the first two that we started playing weeks ago feel like old songs. When we play *The Day That Never Comes* and *Cyanide* you can hear the audience singing along with the band."

"It got to the point where we were so excited about playing these songs that it was more difficult to get in the head space to play older material," says Rob. "It's a good feeling to know that we're going to be playing a bulk of *Death Magnetic* over the next two years."

During the 02 show frontman James Hetfield intimated that the band will be coming back early next year – with a new show rather than a 'greatest hits' package. "It will definitely be a new show featuring the new album," says Kirk. "It will be indoors. We're gonna try and play as many indoor shows as we can over the two or three European tours we've slated next year. It will be less of a festival set and more like the 02 set, and it will be in-the-round again. We're really, really looking forward to it."

"It's going to be new songs, new stage, new fun attitude," says Lars. "Vibrancy and rejuvenation – the whole fucking nine yards."

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Vicious: Kirk Hammett, Lars Ulrich, Lou Reed, Robert Trujillo and James Hetfield.

THE *FIVE* HORSEMEN

Words: **Chris Roberts** Portrait: **Anton Corbijn**

Two things: 1. **Lou Reed** working with **Metallica** is *not* odd ("an *odd* collaboration would be Metallica and *Cher*") and 2. *Lulu*, their album about sex, death and revenge, "is not a party album". Deal with it.

As I'm thrust into a suite at Claridge's with four cameramen plus a girl pointing a fluffy boom mic up my nose, the sight of Lou Reed, James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich sitting on sofas opposite is oddly reassuring. Freaky, and faintly terrifying, obviously, but reassuring to the degree that the story that Lou Reed and Metallica have made an album together, based on two relatively obscure plays much admired by Sigmund Freud, may not have been the deranged fantasy of an internet rumour-monger on disagreeable steroids. Like a restricted view of Mount Rushmore, the three rock gods stare at me, silent, impassive, possibly a bit knackered on this opening day of promo. Someone mutters, "Good to go." To ease us all in, I ask the obvious question; predictable, entirely non-confrontational. So, I say mildly to a safe mid-point between Lou and James and Lars , how did this surprising collaboration come about?

"Why?" rumbles a gruff voice from deep within Lou's bowels. He's a small man, frail, 69 years old. He moves carefully. But when he glares at you, believe me, you stay glared at. "Why is it surprising?" barks that leathery, bespectacled, iconic face.

Uh… two different genres… merging…

"And that's surprising? Who would say that?"

We've been going 25 seconds. I'm not convinced it's going well. Then again, Reed once told me an interview had "started well, but now your questions suck", and in 2004, when I asked if he was clean-living these days, drawled, "Oh, I'm smoking a fucking crack-pipe as we speak, can't you tell?" So, you know, maybe this is promising. He demands to know which specific people on which specific websites have said this collaboration is "surprising". Instinctively I start answering back, just random words really, realise I have no idea and that anyway this isn't the point, then turn around to the director filming the interviews and suggest we take this from the top.

Lou, suddenly an impish, naughty little boy, goes, "But I only got to 'Why?' I was going to then move to where, when, in which language – English? Danish? In Esperanto?" There's a twinkle in his eyes and he's working hard not to laugh. "Go on," he decrees. "Carry on, this'll be good." He all but winks. He's just messing about. (Half a century of picking fights with interviewers must be a hard habit to break. "I've hidden behind the myth of Lou Reed for years," he once said. "I can blame anything outrageous on him. I'm so easily seduced by the public image of Lou Reed that I'm in love with Lou Reed myself.") From here on, he's a pussycat, talking at length and with smarts, even out-talking Lars, which is unheard of. When we're done, he chats for 10 more minutes about his recent solo shows. Beneath the bravado, he's delicate, like a bronze head atop a body made of rice paper. Rising slowly to leave, he shakes my hand four times.

During the bulk of the interview the unlikely alpha trinity of Loutallica are at ease (if a little overtly "After you… No, after you, I insist"), singing each other's praises, the air thick with mutual respect, all on message that *Lulu* is happening. Like it or not, believe it or not, it's well and truly happening. "My *Lulu* had a head," says Reed today, "but she needed a body."

"It's not a party record," he observes. "It's not one of those: 'Hey baby, you sucked my dick, now let's do a line of coke and get a tattoo on the weekend and see you later at grad school, hurrah.' He pauses.

'Loutallica' at the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame concerts, New York, October 2009.

"Okay," he muses. "So it's not that."

The venerable dark prince of New York avant-rock made unconscionably influential music with The Velvet Underground in the 60s before becoming a solo star on the back of Bowie collaboration *Transformer* and has since released a stream of diverse albums, from the punk tangent *Street Hassle* to the cacophonic *Metal Machine Music*, channelling the spirit of Burroughs and Poe. It's safe to say that he thinks. Metallica, the world's best-selling thrash-metal band have been wrangling speed and volume to shape sound in new ways (*Ride The Lightning*, *Master Of Puppets*) since forming in California in '81. It's safe to say that they rock. Today, Reed mentions in passing Tennessee Williams, David Cronenberg and the composer Strauss. James Hetfield says of the album, "We got to stamp 'Tallica on it, y'know? To make it heavy."

Lars says a lot of things, admittedly after turning to the others and politely saying to them, "Shall I do the spiel then?" "Yeah," says Lou, "you're so good at it." "Oh, thank you!" beams Lars, "and that's coming from you!" I also talk to guitarist Kirk Hammett and bassist Rob Trujillo, who are equally enthusiastic. "On paper it does look strange," says Kirk. "No one else in the heavy metal world has done anything like this. It's a new animal."

"It'll definitely freak some people out," says Rob, "and that's good."

If you think about sex, death and alienation, and you probably do, the album isn't so very unlikely. Both parties have consistently dealt with these subjects lyrically, just with contrasting skill sets. The clash-marriage-collision-bonding of the two has delivered something as startling and strange as you'd expect, only more so. It works (and works you hard) on visceral and cerebral levels. Its 90 minutes of noise and neuroses are inspired by the *Lulu* plays (*Earth Spirit* and *Pandora's Box*), written by German expressionist Frank Wedekind. These plays, (set in the 1890s and published in 1895 and 1904 respectively) hugely controversial then and scarcely less so now, flash between the points of view of Lulu (a seductress-victim-Eve-mirror) and her lovers and abusers. There's plenty of sex. Also, Jack the Ripper shows up. Director-choreographer Robert Wilson hired Reed to come up with lyrics and songs for his modern theatrical production in Berlin (a city close to Reed's creative heart since his brilliant 1973 album of that name). Overriding another mooted plan, Reed, in Ulrich's words, "asked if we were game. And we've been forever touched and changed by the experience."

> **"MY LULU HAD A HEAD BUT SHE NEEDED A BODY."**
> **LOU REED**

"We wanted to add to the potency," says Hetfield, "to make it *rock*."

"This is the best thing I ever did," announces Reed, "and I did it with the best guys I could possibly find on this planet."

How, though, did these new best friends meet, plan to record, and then retain the focus, some time later, to get together and do it? Lars does the spiel. They first came together in October 2009 at the 25th Anniversary of the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame concerts, Metallica playing *Sweet Jane* and *White Light/White Heat* onstage at Madison Square Garden with Lou, who declares, "We knew from then that we were made for each other." According to Lars, Metallica had been invited to represent "the left-field artists, the outsiders". Reed was "top of our list to collaborate with. He's like a solo version of Metallica, always done his own thing, reinvented himself, challenging not only himself but his fans." It felt "effortless".

Lou then suggested that they record together. Metallica "ran around the world three times" finishing their *Death Magnetic* commitments, and were "ready". Lou's first idea was to record "some lost Lou Reed jewels," continues Lars, "and we'd do whatever it is we do to those songs." That strategy hung in the air awhile. A week or two before sessions were to begin, Lou called up and sold them his "Lulu" plan. The band were intrigued, Hetfield happy to "take off my singer and lyricist hat and concentrate on the music, to put our 'stamp' on it". ("Stamp?" laughs Reed. "It's branded. And it's not coming out.")

Kirk reveals that the band was much happier with this arrangement, it being a spontaneous collaboration rather than Metallica playing on already-established songs: "We bowed to the magic." Lars talks of being "psyched" by the structureless nature of Reed's songs and of "inventing the wheel"; Hetfield of a "blank canvas". They've tried before, they say, but never been this "far out there". It was "authentic, impulsive… an exciting ride to be on."

If there is any area in which the happy gang don't quite have their story straight – and you have to squint to find it – it's the slight gap between Metallica labelling the material Reed brought along as a "blank canvas" and Reed's notion of them as songs. Put this down to everyone enthusiastically claiming credit: it's honest, boyish zeal all round rather than ego-niggling. That he gave them "atmospheres, sound-scapes" seems to be the consensus, and they fleshed them out. (And lengthily – most of the 10 tracks are in the region of 10 minutes; *Junior Dad* runs to 19.) Reed laughs heartily

GETTY IMAGES x2

when I ask Metallica if the project took them out of their comfort zone. "Have you *heard* their comfort zone?" he says. He's not reluctant, however, to emphasise that the ball started rolling with him. After one speech, it dawns on him that he's hogging the interview, and he says to Lars and James, "I'll stop, I'll just stop…" "I'm enjoying everything you're saying!" beams Lars. "Keep going! Ha ha!" Only the faintly awestruck "ha ha" hints at an excess of eagerness to please. "I'm enjoying it too, it's good stuff," I say, but in truth the three of them are performing for each other, demonstrating how into it they are, barely aware I'm still here. When later I'm signalled to wrap things up, Lars says, "Oh give yourself five more minutes, man!" James murmurs dryly, "We're talking here. It's a wonder anything gets done!"

"I'd worked on this thing for a while," affirms Lou. He gives a back-story of the "immoral, no, amoral" play: how shocking to the bourgeois it was in its day "which I guess is why Wedekind wrote it". He describes Lulu as the great "femme fatale". Lou got what he calls his "paws" on it, and spent time fathoming the narrative with "my significant other, Laurie Anderson". It didn't come easy. "We had to figure out Lulu's psychology, to bring her to life in a sophisticated way, but using rock." He wanted "the hardest power rock you could come up with" and "Metallica live on that planet. Dream come true."

He sent Lars some roughs. James says, "We sat there with an acoustic guitar, listening, and just let it take us where it needed to go. It was a great gift, starting from scratch." Lou stays silent but his presence abides and James switches horses midstream. "Well, there was a body of work there, very potent lyrics, and… we got it together very quickly." Lou turned up at Metallica's HQ studios in California in April and, says Lars, "by lunchtime, we were fucking deep in it. Jamming, playing, throwing paint at the canvas. Happily and hopefully all the 'record' buttons in the cockpit were on."

Whereas Metallica are notorious for spending ages in preparation, agonising over every riff, Lou's rigid stares would let them know that the extended improv they'd just let loose with was a "take".

"It was intuitive," adds Lars, "I mean – 30 years here, but it was just so exciting to just… go. To just feel it, to respond to what was going on." Work was finished in under a month.

"They said: let's go, let's do it, can't wait," says Lou. "I'd been submerging my psyche in Lulu and the various characters, and in the studio we'd examine this further. It's not always Lulu singing; in my mind I'm switching gears, characters. It's not easy. It's like: what happens if you try to bring the whole thing up to the level of Selby, Poe, Burroughs, Inge, Tennessee Williams? There's an argument that if you have to think, you can't rock. But the mind is the most erogenous zone I know, so that's an unusually dumb comment."

James enjoyed the fact that there was "another powerful force in the room." After a feeling-out period, "I'd think: I maybe don't like that part, but should I say something? I don't want to shut the door on stuff because I've been called Dr. No for 20 years. Now I'm almost the opposite, I couldn't stop saying yes! We needed to agree that this was just awesome. Who's steering the ship at that point? The *moment* is. Let go of that fear of no control, and you're in heaven. So many great ideas coming at once: don't mess with them. Celebrate that. A wonderful problem to have."

"Lou's very literate," says Kirk. "He doesn't take any shit," says Rob. Kirk adds that the band tuned their guitars down "to C" to give Lou more range vocally. "That helped him greatly."

Asked if there were happy accidents, Lars says, "The whole thing was one happy accident after another." James says, "There's no accidents here. This was supposed to happen. I absolutely know that." "Oh, me too," concurs Lou. "We happened to kinda meet by accident, but again, there's no such thing as an accident. I don't think we ever disagreed about anything. It was just five guys trying to do this thing, whatever it was."

Whatever it is, it's not, as Reed rightly points out, a party record. With its unblinking beat lyrics and rants of jealousy, lust, violence and revenge, and its grinding riffs, tantalising tones and taxing drones, it's a turbulent, caustic, gruelling, exhausting, uncompromising 90-minute voyage into… "I wouldn't call it the heart of darkness," muses Reed. "I'd call it the heart of illumination."

"It could be disturbing," suggests Rob. "At the same time, it could be beautiful. It's a marriage of attitudes. The very idea of Metallica improvising, literally, was new territory for us. So I personally feel that Lou's made us a better band, more creative, which will definitely help us in the future." "It's next level," says Kirk. "I hope our fans embrace it with an open mind. We're kindred spirits. Mesh us together, it creates something graphic, cinematic *and* heavy."

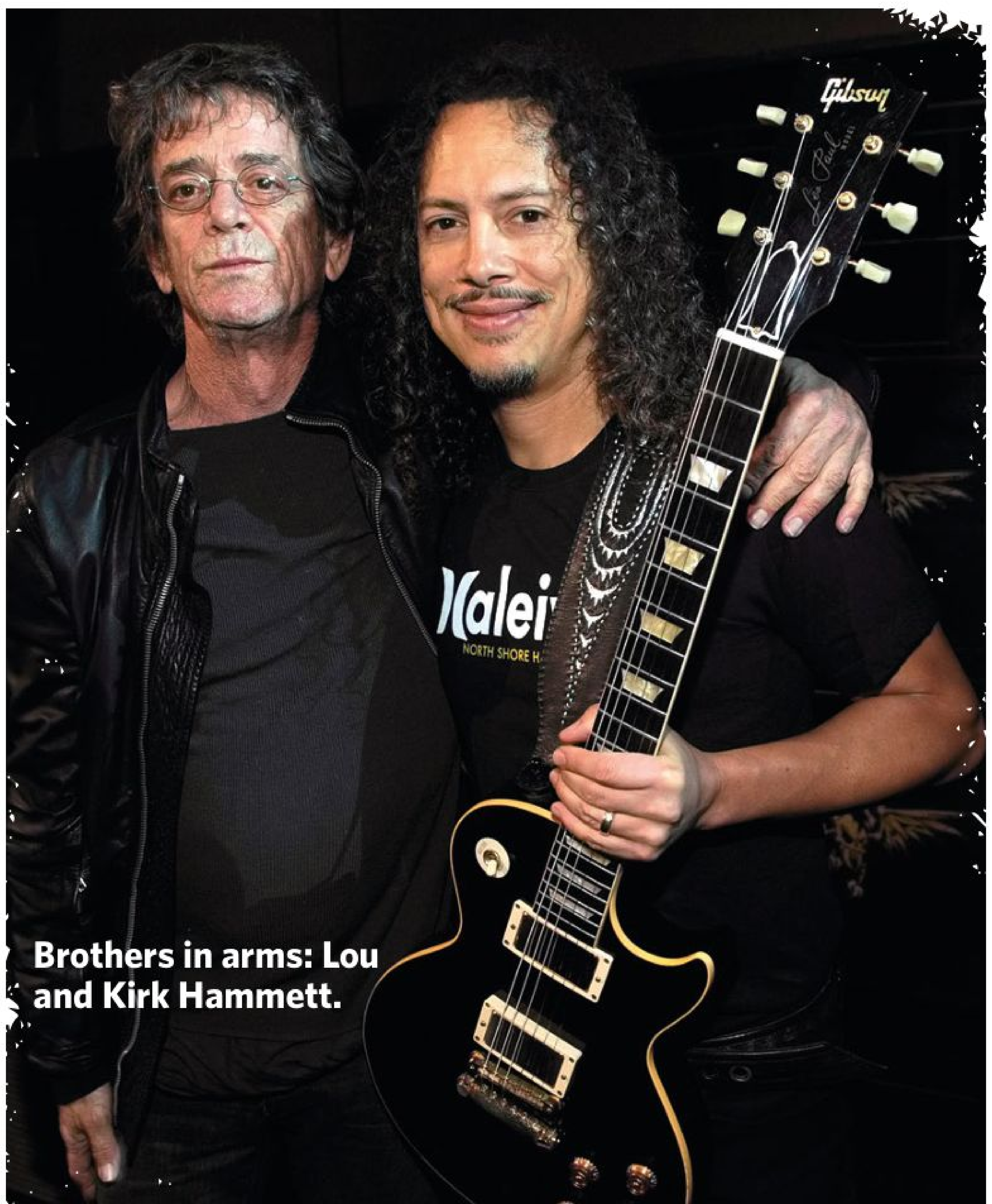
"There they were," declares Lou. "Pushing me to the best I've ever been. By definition, everybody in there was honest. You say it's an 'odd' collaboration? An 'odd' collaboration would be Metallica and Cher. This is an obvious one."

"Lou knows," says James, "I've been searching for something like this for a while. We needed it."

So is it a one-off? Will this go down as one of rock's most historic triumphs/debacles? Or are these loved-up best buds, these contrasts-in-arms, in it for the duration?

"We never go that far in our thinking," says Reed. "It's enough to me that we're even on this planet. This thing has been shepherded into the world unsullied and will go out the way it came in. Pure. This is a new genre here, and we punch it out. This is where I like to exist."

Lulu was released Oct 31, 2011.



Brothers in arms: Lou and Kirk Hammett.

COMING TOGETHER

Genre crossover collaborations have been pretty hit and miss over the years...

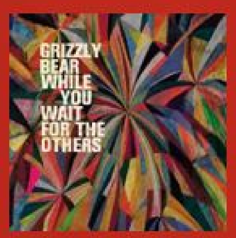
BLACK SABBATH: The heavy metal pioneers have been among heavy music's most iconic bands for 40 years.
ICE-T: US hip-hop legend figure, Ice earned his notoriety by being simultaneously obnoxious and pretty damn smart.
DID IT WORK? Not even vaguely. By the time Sabbath recorded *Forbidden* in 1995, they were struggling in every department. Ice-T's spirited but ill-advised rap on opening track *The Illusion Of Power* did no one any favours.

QUEEN: Lords of theatrical rock bombast and still a treasured institution, despite the tragic death of singer Freddie Mercury in 1991.
FIVE: Utterly charmless and heroically low-rent, late-90s boy band.
DID IT WORK? *We Will Rock You* has been repeatedly hijacked by sporting events over the years, but when Five coughed up their hapless rendition in the summer of 2000, May and Taylor should've steered well clear.

DAVID BOWIE: Rock's premier chameleon and expert blender of the populist and the joyously pretentious.
BING CROSBY: Revered American crooner whose dulcet tones were the aural equivalent of a lovely cardigan knitted by your nan.
DID IT WORK? No Christmas is sufficiently drenched in schmaltz without the gentle mumbling of their *Little Drummer Boy*. Its charms are all the greater because Bowie was probably off his bonce on brain candy.

HAWKWIND: Overlords of a cheerfully resilient space rock scene that only really exists in the brain of founder Dave Brock.
MATTHEW WRIGHT: Grinning TV man who rules weekdays with his phone-in show.
DID IT WORK? When Hawkwind-fan Wright was asked to sing on a new version of the 'wind's mighty *Spirit Of The Age*, he almost certainly soiled himself with glee. The record sold at least nine copies.

NICKO McBRAIN: Iron Maiden's drummer since 1982 is widely regarded as one of the greatest skin-belters of all-time.
SOOTY: Inaudible yellow bear and star of children's television for several decades.
DID IT WORK? McBrain appeared on an *The Sooty Show* in 1988. Viewable on YouTube, it clearly had a profound impact on the drummer, who has been milking it ever since.



MICHAEL McDONALD: The Doobie Brother, Steely Dan sidekick and soft-rock behemoth.
GRIZZLY BEAR: Esoteric, Brooklyn-based indie folk oddballs.
DID IT WORK? Very much so. McDonald sang an alternative lead vocal for the New Yorkers' rather brilliant 2009 single *While You Wait For The Others* and the critical response was overwhelmingly positive.

Lars: bona fide metal maniac

CHRIS SCHWEGNER / ATLASICONS

ARY OF A MADMAN

WORDS: DAVE EVERLEY

HE'S ONE OF THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL AND OUTSPOKEN FIGURES IN OUR WORLD, AND FOR BETTER OR WORSE, LARS ULRICH HAS NEVER BEEN LOST FOR WORDS. IN A WORLD-EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW, METALLICA'S FOUNDER TELLS US ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE PLANET'S BIGGEST METAL BAND.

The world's biggest Metallica fan has spent the last 40 minutes talking, without repetition, hesitation or deviation, about his favourite band. This a man who lives and breathes his chosen subject, to the point where he could draft a PhD paper on them with his eyes closed and his hands tied behind his back. Pull out a live date and he can tell you exactly where he was; dust down the most obscure album track in their back catalogue and he can tell you what he was doing when he first heard it. But don't presume that this is blind love: he's as aware of their missteps as he is their triumphs; he's their harshest critic as well as their biggest champion. But then he's allowed to be. The world's biggest Metallica fan also happens to be their drummer.

"Yeah, I don't think that's unfair to say," he says in an accent that still sits halfway between Copenhagen and California. "When you're on the inside, you get a certain… perspective."

Lars Ulrich occupies a unique position in the band he co-founded in Los Angeles in 1982. He's both their biggest cheerleader and their chief whipping boy. His tireless hustling during the band's early years ensured they didn't slip down the back of the sofa with the likes of Laaz Rockit and Jag Panzer, while his single-minded devotion to the cause helped propel them from cult thrashers to A-list stars. Metallica wouldn't be Metallica without James Hetfield. But they certainly wouldn't be the biggest metal band ever without Lars Ulrich.

The flipside is that, to many, Lars is Metallica. Not onstage – that honour goes to the larger-than-life James. But the drummer's garrulous presence in the press has turned him into Metallica's public figurehead. All well and good when things are going well, but not so good when things aren't. Like the CEO of some huge conglomerate, when Metallica's fortunes have hit a sticky patch, Lars Ulrich has born the brunt of it. And there have been a few sticky patches over the last 30 years.

But right now, both parties are back in the credit column. 2012 was a banner year for Metallica. Not musically – the only thing they released was the Beyond Magnetic EP, a collection of four unpolished tracks swept up from the studio floor following sessions for 2008's Death Magnetic album. No, 2012 marked the start of their fourth decade as a band. It's arguably the most significant staging post yet on a journey that has swung from triumph to disaster and back again.

"It's been eventful," he says with ironic understatement. "I know some people are sick to death of hearing it, but we have a newfound appreciation for our success and how fortunate we are that we can still function 30 years later."

There's a battered old sofa in Metallica HQ, their studio-come-clubhouse across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, that has played a small but significant part in their career. It's the sofa that Lars sat on when he and his bandmates reconvened in the mid-noughties after a year apart to talk about their turbulent recent past and their immediate future – specifically whether they had one or not. It's the same sofa that Lars is sitting on right now, as he takes a break from Metallica's day-to-day business to talk about virtually the same subjects, more than half a decade on. Today's main point of order is ostensibly *Quebec Magnetic*, a double live DVD recorded in Canada on the Death Magnetic

Fighting fire with… riffs in Quebec

"THE SNARE DRUM was ON AND there are GUITAR SOLOS, in CASE ANYBODY was wondering"

LARS GIVES US THE LOWDOWN ON METALLICA'S NEW MATERIAL

tour in 2009.

The early part of the century was a strange one for Metallica. For the first 20 years of their existence, they were about as bulletproof as it gets. Then, sometime around the drummer's much-publicised run-in with Napster in 1999, things took a turn for the wobbly. The ensuing half-decade is well documented – James's near-breakdown, the departure of Jason Newsted, the painful creation of *St Anger* and the baffled reaction that greeted it, all captured with cathartic honesty in *Some Kind Of Monster* – was the closest Metallica have ever come to extinction. All of a sudden, this most super-human of metal bands suddenly seemed all too human.

The turning point came in November 2005, a couple of weeks before they were due to return to the fray with a pair of shows supporting the Rolling Stones in San Francisco. They'd gathered around that sofa to draw up a road-map for they way forward.

"The few years after the near-meltdown of the band that was so well captured in *Some Kind Of Monster* were obviously not easy," says Lars. "We were still trying to figure it out, post-Hetfield rehab, post-Jason leaving, post all that stuff. But in November 2005, we walked into HQ and sat on the couch that I'm sitting on now, and everything felt really fresh. There was no film crew, no psychiatrists, everybody was rested. I think, especially, Hetfield felt like whatever it was he'd been struggling with in the wake of his issues, and readjusting to touring and the whole world of Metallica, it felt like all that had dissipated."

A week after the Stones gigs, Metallica entered what Lars calls the next "cycle" in their career. As *Death Magnetic* gradually took shape, it was clear that things were on the upswing once again.

"There was a different vibe," he says. "It was just the four of us. And it was really cool. That spirit went through the whole four- or five-year cycle. There was something magical about that cycle."

In that respect, *Quebec Magnetic* is as much a document of a band getting back on the rails as *Some Kind Of Monster* was of a band flying off them in the first place. They had the idea for the DVD after playing two shows in Montreal in September 2009. Within a fortnight, they'd scrambled a film crew to record two gigs in Quebec.

"I don't know if you've ever watched a rock'n'roll show in that part of Canada, but it's a whole different experience," he says. "The French Canadians are fucking mental. So when we came offstage, we said, 'We should film a DVD out here.'"

The Death Magnetic show, as captured on the DVD, was a brave move for a band who had come so close to extinction just a few years earlier. Not so much in-the-round as in-the-rectangle, it positioned the four of them slap-bang in the middle of the arena. Nothing new there, of course: they'd been doing that on and off since the days of The Black Album. The difference this time was the fact that there were no video screens.

What sounds like a minor detail utterly changed the dynamic of the show – 20,000 pairs of eyes were entirely focused on what was happening onstage. It was a huge decision for a band whose psychic defences were still in recovery after an almighty, *St Anger*-shaped battering. It was, says Lars, a conscious attempt to take Metallica out of their self-imposed comfort zone.

"It forces both the audience and the band to connect more," he says. "It forces the audience to be a little more engaged, and it forces the band to project more. It's easy to just sit up there and know that your image is being projected on these huge screens, so maybe you don't have to try as hard."

Does the lack of screens make you work harder as the drummer?

"It's not just me," he says. "It's everybody. You're out in the thick of it. There's never a place to hide – it takes the safety net away, forces you to be in the moment. You have to be 120 per cent every fucking minute. When Hetfield turns his back to one part of the audience, he's staring at another part of the audience. That's why he'll turn to his amp and play

"The tongue hanging out... it's not really something I can do much about..."

with his back to the crowd for three minutes."

James might be the one at the microphone, but he's not Metallica's only frontman. Behind him, Lars spends much of the band's shows wrenching the spotlight away from his bandmate – he provides the gurning, mugging, drumstick-pointing foil to James's monolithic presence.

"Look, I've heard it – 'Why does he get off the kit all the time, why is he jumping around?'" he says. "That's what I do. It's what I've always done. I've always wanted to connect with the audience. Not as a kind of show-off: 'Look how big my dick is.' But ever since the beginning of Metallica, we've tried to get as close to the audience as possible. And that meant all of us, not just the singer. It's just been part of our live shtick, and works for us because it keeps us firing on as many cylinders as possible. When I get up onstage, man, I turn into a caricature. I see it myself – the silly faces, the tongue hanging out, all that stuff – but it's not really something I can do much about. It just happens when I get up there. It's not something you can turn on and off."

Lars Ulrich has never been publicly plagued with self-doubt, but his confidence as Metallica kick off their fourth decade seems to be impregnable once more. The artistic home win of *Death Magnetic* and the personal triumphs of the subsequent tour finally ended the lengthy mid-life crisis that kicked off with their Napster run-in. A few months ago, the drummer told *Metal Hammer* that the band were "circling around new stuff" for their 10th studio album. Have they touched down yet?

"Well, the five things we were working on last night all sounded pretty amazing to my ears," he says. "But then again, I'm biased."

Oh really? Which direction are you heading in musically?

"I don't know if I can give you some cosmic overview," he says. "The stuff that we were banging around yesterday, it felt heavy, it felt energetic, it was loud, it was fast, it was rocking, it was crazy. It's easier to tell you what it's not. There were no odd instruments in the room – the hurdy gurdy player had a day off. The snare drum was on and there are guitar solos, in case anybody was wondering."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ROSS HALFIN, CHRIS SCHWEGNER / ATLASICONS, GETTY

Look out, Kirk! There's a giant laser-toting coffin behind you!

Doris and James: a lovely couple

PROPS UP YOUR ASS!

THE VERY BEST STAGE PROPS FROM METALLICA'S CAREER.

THE STATUE (1987)

What it was: Gigantic polystyrene statue of the Lady Of Justice, as featured on the cover of *...And Justice For All*. Nicknamed 'Doris' by the band.

What it did: It basically, well, just collapsed during the climax of the show. And that's about it. Hey, it was the 80s. Things were different then.

Any good? Surprisingly effective, especially combined with a falling lighting gantry that swung inches above Hetfield's head.

THE SNAKE PIT (1991)

What it was: Not so much as stage prop as a giant hole in the stage.

What it did: It didn't actually do anything as such, but it gave a few lucky fans a place to watch the show up close and even tape it with the band's approval. Hey, it was the early 90s. Things were different then.

Any good? Yep, it was revolutionary in making the fans part of the show. And a few years later, they'd be able to share their goodies on Napster.

THE COLLAPSING STAGE (1996)

What it was: A giant, double-diamond-shaped stage that sat in the middle of the arena. All very impressive, if fairly innocuous...

What it did: It was only innocuous until about two-thirds of the way through the show, when the whole thing began to fall apart, complete with falling lighting rigs and flaming roadies running across the stage. Hey, it was the late 90s. Bands had a lot more money then.

Any good? Good Christ, yes. Especially as only a dozen people in the world knew how to use the newfangled 'world wide web', so it was a complete surprise to most people.

THE COFFINS (2009)

What it was: The most memorable feature of 2009's otherwise austere Death Magentic stage set: four giant coffins hanging from the ceiling.

What it did: Nothing much, beyond descending from the ceiling, slowly rotating and firing off a few lasers. There's a recession on, don't you know?

Any good? They were OK if you're a fan of laser-toting coffins. Otherwise, move along, there's nothing here for you.

THE 3D STAGE

What it was: The Quality Street tin of Metallica stage sets: it had something for everyone. Appeared during two shows in Mexico earlier this year [this interview was originally published in 2012], where it was filmed for their forthcoming 3D movie.

What it did: What *didn't* it do? The 3D stage featured key Metallica iconography from down the years, including a 20-foot high 'Metal Up Your Ass' toilet, then threw in a giant LED stage floor for good measure.

Any good? Absolutely brilliant, if the YouTube clips are anything to go by. We're sure everything will be revealed come the middle of next year...

Metallica at their Orion festival. Love it or leave it!

"ORION is OUR festival. IF YOU DON'T LIKE it, GO BOOK YOUR OWN"

LARS DOESN'T GIVE TWO SHITS ABOUT THE CRITICISM FOR BOOKING ARCTIC MONKEYS

He cites *Death Magentic* as "a good point of origin" for the new material they are working on, which isn't the worst position to start from. After two decades of pressing forward and nearly coming unstuck, that album was the closest they have ever come to shifting into reverse: paradoxically, in encouraging the band to take inspiration from their own past for the first time, producer Rick Rubin gave them a new lease of life.

"*Death Magnetic* is one motherfucker of a record," says Lars. "When did it come out?"

Four years ago. September 2008.

"Right,' he nods. "To my ears, and I'm only talking my ears, there aren't many Metallica records that sound as good as *Death Magnetic* four years after they were made. With a lot of the other records we've made, there were questions, or there were puzzled looks: 'Why did we do that?' or 'What was going on there?' or 'Why didn't somebody say to turn the snare on?' I don't feel like that with *Death Magnetic*. What we're doing now certainly sounds like a continuation of where we left off with that record four years ago."

Two questions, then. One, will Rick Rubin be involved at some point?

"I love Rick. We all love Rick. We're in touch with Rick constantly. We will see where it goes."

OK. Second question: will the new album be out in 2013?

"I think with the amount of stuff we've got to deal with, it'd stun me if the record came out in 2013. We've got to finish this 3D movie, which is what we're doing right now. We've got that whole thing next year."

Ah, the 3D film. Of all the projects on Metallica's upcoming schedule, this is both the most intriguing, and the one that could end up a huge triumph or a massive disaster. Right now, it's shrouded in secrecy to the point where the band's representatives have instructed me not to ask about it (typically, Lars is the one who brings it up). What we know: the band filmed some truly epic live shows in Mexico and Canada earlier this year, which saw them playing on a massive and expensive-looking set that featured a light-up stage floor and stage props referencing the various points of their career; it will feature live shows, but also offstage narrative scenes featuring actor Dane DeHaan, who appeared in sci-fi TV show *Chronicle*; the director, the fantastically named Nimród Antal, is responsible for 2007 horror flick *Vacancy*.

It sounds suspiciously like a modern version of Led Zeppelin's infamous 1976 movie *The Song Remains The Same*, which featured live footage spliced with film of the band dressed as wizards and farmers. Are we getting warm?

"Well, obviously, there are similarities," he says, with more than a hint of sarcasm. "There are four members in Led Zeppelin, four members in Metallica, it's a full-length movie, and there's a lot of this film that does not take place onstage. The major difference, and I don't want to give too much of it away, is that the stuff that takes place offstage in the Metallica movie, the narrative, does not feature any members of Metallica. It's two separate worlds – a Metallica show and a story that unfolds in a parallel universe – and at some point they intertwine."

That'll be a 'no', then.

Allow us to indulge in spot of armchair psychology at this point. During their first decade, Metallica went from thrash metal princelings to kings of all they surveyed in double quick time, and they've stayed there ever since. But even kings get bored and feel the need to shake themselves up once in a while. 'Getting out of your comfort zone', it's called. With Metallica, that desire has manifested itself in some peculiar decisions. Sometimes, it's been part of their natural evolution (see the stylistic diversions of *Load* and *Reload*, two albums that don't deserve the scorn heaped on them). Sometimes, it's been an idea so ill-conceived that you wonder what they'd been smoking that morning (*Lulu*, which most definitely does). Sometimes it's felt like a test – of their fans as well as themselves – but mostly, it's been like a case of 'No offence but we're Metallica and we can do what the buggery we like.'

In July this year, the band launched an event that sat at the mid-point on that particular scale. The Orion Festival was a two-day boutique bash held in Atlantic City, curated by Metallica themselves. The band themselves headed up a schizophrenic bill that ranged between the cream of modern metal

CHRIS SCHWEGNER / ATLASICONS

Robert Trujillo, Lars Ulrich, James Hetfield and Kirk Hammett: not getting bored any time soon. Or, indeed, ever

"WE'RE IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE mentally AND PHYSICALLY. it's not LIKE we're walking around like THESE OLD FUCKING DINOSAURS"

THE FAT LADY WILL NOT BE SINGING ANYTIME SOON FOR METALLICA

(Baroness, Ghost, Torche), on-trend indie music (Arctic Monkeys, Modest Mouse, Wooden Shijps) and one-off mavericks (Texan psychedelic pioneer Roky Erikson). It was, depending on your view of these things, either an admirably diverse snapshot inside the heads of Metallica in 2012 or another sizable chip out of the foundations on which they are built.

"It felt like a success to us," he says. "We played a couple of fun shows, saw some great movies, got to do stuff with a bunch of really cool bands, got to hang out and introduce the Arctic Monkeys. The feedback we got from a lot of the hardcore Metallica fans, the ones who have been following our every move and come to the opening of a Metallica envelope, was that they were really digging it."

There are a chunk of Metallica fans who weren't so impressed with the idea of Metallica handpicking a band like the Arctic Monkeys…

"Dude, I gave up trying to work out who the standard Metallica fan was a long time ago," he says, sighing. "Anybody who knows us well enough knows that it's not gonna be Metallica and nine death metal bands.

"We had our friends in Lamb Of God and Machine Head and Mastodon out with us on the Death Magnetic tour, and so we just want to do something slightly different. I think that a lot of people were into the diversity, but I also understand that obviously there are some people who are not into the same level of diversity as we are, and we respect that." He laughs. "But it's our festival. You don't like it, book your own."

More than once today, Lars describes Metallica as "a metal band, quote-end quote", suggesting an underlying frustration that they're still ghetto-ised after all these years.

It's the sort of thing guaranteed to rile the portion of their fanbase that objects to the idea of 48-year-old men having diverse tastes in music or the ones who overlook the fact that Metallica have done more for their chosen genre than most other bands.

Still, the question has to be asked: if he was filling in an online dating form, would he put 'Metal Fan' as part of the description?

Ha ha ha ha! "Of course I would! Fuck yeah! God help my poor assistant Barbara, but about six months ago I asked her to put all the CDs in my library onto a couple of iPods, and I've got them in my car. I listen to stuff all the time. Do you remember Loudmouth? Great American band from the late 90s. I discovered them on my iPod a week ago. I was listening to [venerable Japanese metal band] Bow Wow a couple of days ago."

What about modern metal?

"I got the new Soundgarden record yesterday. I'm looking forward to listening to that in the next couple of days. I just got the new Sword album, which is fucking fantastic.

"Obviously, when you carry 250 gigabytes of music around with you, you spend a bigger portion of time listening to older stuff than you did 10 or 20 years ago. Back then you mostly carried the latest releases around with you."

Metallica marked the end of their first three decades with the mother of all parties: a week-long series of gigs at The Fillmore in their hometown of San Francisco, which featured guest appearances from former members, past collaborators and assorted musicians who have influenced them over the years. If anything refilled the tank of goodwill for Metallica, it was those gigs.

Even so, the idea of one band sustaining a 30-year-career – and a massively successful one at that – must have prompted some existential internal dialogue. Did he ever wake up and think, 'How the hell did that happen'? What follows is a typical Lars Ulrich answer: long and convoluted and running parallel to the point, if not quite shooting off at right angles. The short answer is 'no'. This is the long answer:

"There are times, because I have two lives… I could be up at 6.45, being Mr Dad. Making breakfast, taking kids to school with hundreds of other parents. That's the kind of domestic thing that a lot of rockers deal with, obviously. Then a couple of hours later, you're driving to the airport to jump on a plane to Kansas City, where you're playing a gig in front of 19,000 people. Sometimes you sit there and go, 'Huh, this is really weird – a few hours ago, I was taking my kids to school. These two worlds co-exist, and that's kind of a mindfuck. Mindfuck is a word that shows up on my radar a lot. The whole thing is kind of a mindfuck. But the fact that it's been four decades?

CHRIS SCHWEGNER / ATLASICONS, FIN COSTELLO / GETTY

Ex-tennis champ Lars serves up another winning set

Rob Trujillo: the man mountain on bass

"If there comes a time when we're not burning on all 12 cylinders, I hope we have the guts to walk away"

A WORLD WITHOUT METALLICA IS BETTER THAN A WORLD WITH A LACKLUSTRE ONE, ACCORDING TO LARS

It's not something that I carry with me a lot."

You formed Metallica when you were 18. You're 48 now. Do you ever feel old?

"I don't feel particularly old," he says. "And I don't feel particularly weathered, other than sometimes when we've played a couple of shows, and I've not warmed up in the proper way. Generally, knock on a lot of wood, we're in pretty good shape mentally and physically. It's not like we're walking around like these old fucking dinosaurs."

There have been changes in the last 10 years, of course. To combat the 10.5 magnitude earthquake of the *St Anger* period, Team Metallica put in place a set of rules to ensure the whole edifice wouldn't come crashing to the ground in future. Partly, these were to pre-empt any potential personnel crises; partly they were down to the simple needs of four family men in their late 40s who have spent the past three decades circling the globe with barely enough time wipe their hairy arses.

"We have a rule in our band where we don't stay away from home for more than two weeks. We tour in very, very short spurts: a week on, a week off, or two weeks on, two weeks off if we're doing Europe or Australia. It stops us from falling off the deep end. It's certainly not the most economical way of touring, but we feel like it's an investment in our own sanity."

Is there a part of you that misses the chaos and carnage of the late 80s and early 90s?

"Ha ha ha! 'Carnage' – that's a brilliant word! Some of the shit we got up to, especially because we were a little more under the radar than some of our peers, was carnage. There is not a fucking moment of that I would change. I'm not one of those regretful people. I'm glad I lived it. I'll always access it in the back of my mind. I'll be able to pull up stories – I'll have a little smile on my face as I relive what happened in Portland, Oregon, in 1992 or wherever.

"I'm sitting here doing this interview, then in about 13 minutes I have to go pick up my kids to take them to a swimming lesson, so it's very different structure to back in the day, obviously. Once in a while, you do kind of wish you could drive to the airport and fly to Vegas and sit yourself in front of a blackjack table for a whole day. It only lasts for a few seconds and I wouldn't change anything about what I'm doing today, but I'm really, really happy that I have all that carnage in my head."

Do you ever think there'll be a day when you wake up and go, 'You know what? I'm bored of being in Metallica'?

"I don't think that I'll ever be bored of being in Metallica. I think that one of two things can happen. One, is the physicality of what we do – if we don't have the strength to do it physically any more. We will always have the strength to do it mentally, so I'm not worried about that. But if there ever comes a time when we feel that it's not going on all 12 cylinders, then I hope that we have the guts to walk away from it.

"The other thing that could happen is that you decide you want to pursue something else: 'I'm really interested in film' or 'I'm really interested in painting.' Is there a chance that when I'm 55, I'll want to write a movie? Or that James Hetfield will want to make a country record? Or that Kirk Hammett will want to go surfing for a year?

"But I don't think I'll ever wake up and go, 'I'm bored of being in Metallica', because of the nature of who we are as people, and the dynamics in our personalities. We always make it interesting for ourselves. That's why we do crazy shit like *Some Kind Of Monster* and the 3D movies. We throw ourselves these challenges. It's to make sure that boredom never sets in."

That'll be another 'no', then.

It's generally hard to feel sorry for a multi-millionaire rock star, but sometimes that's exactly the reaction Lars provokes. Love him or loathe him, 30 years haven't dimmed his enthusiasm for music in general and Metallica in particular. That's more than you can say for an awful lot of people who have been doing the same job for the same length of time, whether they're musicians or binmen. For all his perceived faults – the cockiness, the arrogance, the gurning – he's neither lazy nor naïve nor out-of-touch with what people say about him and his band.

"Listen, we're a gang of guys that stand up for each other and stand up for what we do," he says. "Within that gang are four people who are pretty diverse and, between us, cast a fairly big net in terms of what we're into. But we're very proud of where we come from and we're fiercely protective of what we do."

Thirty years on, do you ever think about the younger version of yourself? Looking back, do you think the 18-year-old Lars was a go-getting kid or an unbearable prick?

CHRIS SCHWEGNER / ATLASICONS

Eighties Metallica with the late, great Cliff Burton

Having dropped the kids off at school, Lars gets down to another day at the office

THE Best OF METALLICA 1992–2012

THINK IT ENDED WITH THE BLACK ALBUM? THINK AGAIN…

1 HERO OF THE DAY

Load's reputation as the point where Metallica jumped the shark is undeserved. Sure, it's not a five-star classic like *Ride The Lightning,* but it's got it's share of zingers, not least this mid-paced belter.

2 THE OUTLAW TORN

Load's closing track, this was overlooked even at the time. But the monstrous groove and epic build-up showed they could still do 'immense' when they wanted to.

3 FUEL

The red-headed step-child of the Metallica back-catalogue, *Reload* is their most underrated album. For starters, it kicked off with this gas-guzzling behemoth, still the best opener they've written. Yep, better than *Enter Sandman.*

4 LOW MAN'S LYRIC

Utterly brilliant slice of woozy melancholy, buried towards the back end of *Reload*. Even without the hurdy gurdy, it's still the weirdest song they've ever written.

5 NO LEAF CLOVER

Their great lost treasure, casually tossed away amid the hit-and-miss symphonies of *S&M*. James Hetfield is at his most, well, Hetfield-esque as he stares down the light of an oncoming train: *"GOOD DAY TO BE ALIVE, SUH!!"*

6 ALL WITHIN MY HANDS (LIVE)

The clattering racket of *St Anger* was an unsuccessful experiment. Lost in the chaos at the time, this closing track was given a new lease of life when it was dusted down for an acoustic appearance at Neil Young's Bridge Street Benefit concert.

7 WE'RE A HAPPY FAMILY

Metallica get their Ramones on with this sledgehammer cover of Da Bruddas' punk rock classic from a 2003 tribute album of the same name. The song features a certain Mr L. Ulrich, Esq, singing the bridge.

8 ALL NIGHTMARE LONG

If *Death Magnetic* was the sound of a band embracing their past, this nine-minute bruiser was pitched somewhere between *The Black Album*'s sonic punch and *Master Of Puppets'* kinetic complexity. Proof that Metallica were back in the room.

9 REBEL OF BABYLON

The best of the four studio offcuts released on the *Beyond Magnetic* EP: this one was on nodding terms with *…And Justice For All*. But at least they'd remembered to turn up the bass.

10 WHEN A BLIND MAN CRIES

Respectful, if Metalli-cised cover of the slow-burning Deep Purple gem, recorded for a recent tribute album. It's odd to hear keyboards so prominent in a Metallica song, though.

Lars, Cliff and James get the beers in back in the day

THE CALL OF QUEBEC

DOES THE WORLD REALLY NEED ANOTHER TASTE OF METALLICA'S LIVE EVIL? FUCK YES IT DOES.

Their first live release since 2010's *The Big Four: Live From Sofia, Bulgaria* – *Quebec Magnetic* was actually filmed before the Big 4 extravaganzas that shook the metal world to its very core. Shot by acclaimed director Wayne Isham on the 2009 World Magnetic tour over two nights in Quebec, funnily enough, Metallica's latest live offering shows them on very fine form indeed. Now some of the pessimists out there might question what need there is for another Metallica DVD in this world, but the truth is that this is the first worldwide Metallica live release since *S&M*. That's right, the very same *S&M* which came out in 1999 on CD and 2000 on DVD. Granted, *Français Pour Une Nuit* and *Orgullo, Pasión y Gloria: Tres Noches en la Ciudad de México* were shot and recorded on the same World Magnetic tour, but those were only released locally in France and Latin America respectively.

So, what's on it? Well not only do you get an absolute rager of a Metallica setlist that was handpicked by over 35,000 fans – including three tracks that haven't been featured on a live DVD yet (*The End Of The Line*, *My Apocalypse* and *The Judas Kiss*) – but also a shit-ton of bonus content including behind-the-scenes footage of the metal legends. Sounds like a solid investment to us.

It's on sale now, so ask Santa nicely…

"We're *very* PROUD OF WHERE WE COME FROM"

"I'd say that if the word 'prick' has been applicable, it would be more late 20s, early 30s. That's when it got a little nutty there, post-Black Album success. I think, thankfully, we've left that behind. But the 18-year-old me? I would say that he was pretty green and pretty starry-eyed. He was still a virgin at 18 and still had a lot of living to do. He was just a little nerdy loner who loved his metal. He wasn't a misfit or anything, he was just a loner. I loved being by myself. That's what me and Hetfield found in each other. We lived in our own world, and we bonded over all things metal."

What about vice versa? What do you think the 18-year-old Lars Ulrich would think of the 48-year-old version of himself?

There's a few seconds' pause, which is lifetime in Lars Ulrich's terms. "I think he'd think that he's alright. He does a pretty good job of keeping it real and dealing with all the things he does. I realised that I say one phrase quite often: 'I'm doing the best I can.'" He laughs. "And I think the 18-year-old would look at the 48-year-old and go, 'He's doing the best he can.'" ✠

Quebec Magnetic, Beyond Magnetic and Metallica Through The Never are all available now.

GETTY

SATAN
FIST

> “THE BACKLASH CAN’T BE ANY WORSE THAN FOR THE LOU REED ALBUM”
>
> ROBERT TRUJILLO

SCREEN AIM FIRE!

THE WORLD’S BIGGEST METAL BAND ARE JUST ABOUT TO UNVEIL WHAT LOOKS SET TO BE THE MOST METAL MOVIE EVER MADE. HERE’S HOW IT ALL CAME TOGETHER...

ROSS HALFIN

WORDS: DAVE EVERLEY

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away… the world's biggest metal band decided to make a movie. Actually, it wasn't that long ago – the start of 2012 to be precise, though the idea had been kicking around for a long time before that. Nor was it in a distant galaxy – rather, it was somewhere between a studio-cum-bunker in Northern California and the meeting rooms of an LA production company.

Whatever the specifics, when Metallica announced that they would be filming three shows in Edmonton and Vancouver, Canada, for an ambitious IMAX 3D movie, the internet lit up. They had previous form on the big screen, of course – 2004's *Some Kind Of Monster* was the ultimate rock documentary, a self-laceratingly honest portrait of a band battling to save its soul. But this was something entirely different.

Initial details were sketchy, but they promised it would turn the idea of the live film upside down, then drop it head-first onto the concrete.As the weeks and months progressed, precious little information escaped the gravitational pull of the black hole that is Metallica HQ. Curiosity gave way to bafflement. Bafflement gave way to speculation. It was a concert movie. It was an action movie. It was their version of Led Zeppelin's *The Song Remains The Same*. It was the Apocalypse on film.

When Lars Ulrich spoke to *Hammer* in the autumn of 2012, he was uncharacteristically cagey. "It's two separate worlds," said the drummer. "A Metallica show and a story that unfolds in a parallel universe. And at some point they intertwine."

Gradually, things started to come into something approaching focus. The movie would be titled *Through The Never*, after a track from their self-titled 1991 album (aka The Black Album). It would be directed by Nimród Antal, the man behind 2007 horror *Vacancy* and 2010's *Predators*, and star fast-rising actor Dane DeHaan, of cult sci-fi movie *Chronicle*, as a roadie named Trip.

The band would be funding it themselves (according to unconfirmed rumours, the budget was $30 million – modest in Hollywood terms but a fortune by music industry standards). And yes, it would feature a post-apocalyptic narrative complete with explosions, blood and carnage.

Oh, and music.

"Between all that insanity," says James Hetfield, "there's four guys bashing you with loud music and fire and all the props from the last 30 years, on steroids, put into one big stage."

Nearly two years on from that initial announcement, *Through The Never* finally comes crashing into a view like a Godzilla rampaging through downtown Tokyo. The trailer for the film has certainly ratcheted up anticipation. The suitably apocalyptic action footage shows Trip driving a huge RV down deserted streets, only to be up-ended at a crossroads – at which point things take a turn for the weird (a man on a horse racing down a freeway? A reference to The Four Horsemen, possibly?)

All this is interspersed with spectacular footage of the band playing on a giant LED stage, featuring props from key stages of their career – illuminated *Master Of Puppets*-era crosses, a Lady Justice statue, a giant papier-mâché model of psychiatrist Phil Towle (OK, we're lying about that last one).

"Lars explained to me early on that he wanted ideas," Nimród Antal tells *Metal Hammer*. "They wanted a story that would work within a concept that they had, which was marrying a narrative to a concert film. They had this incredible stage performance, which they wanted to capture. And they wanted the narrative to influence the concert and vice versa."

Nimród came onboard early. The American-Hungarian director's first movie was 2003's Hungarian language comedy-thriller *Kontrol*, though 2010's *Predators* was his biggest gig to date. But making a film about dreadlocked aliens poncing about in a jungle is a world away from capturing the world's biggest metal band in full flight and yoking it to a story that's part *Mad Max*, part *Twilight Zone*.

"We all watched *The Wall*, of course, and *The Song Remains The Same* and [The Band's] *The Last Waltz* – the leading crossover concert-narrative type films," says the movie's producer Charlotte Huggins. "And James handed me *Français Pour Une Nuit*, which is an incredible concert movie they shot in Nîmes." To make things doubly difficult, Nimród was effectively filming two separate movies. The action scenes were shot over 11 or 12 days in Vancouver in August 2012, around the same time as the live shows. The latter was a work of epic proportions in itself.

"It's the largest indoor stage ever," says Metallica bassist Rob Trujillo. "It's pretty dangerous – we spent a couple of weeks in Mexico City preparing for this, playing to 20,000 people a night. By the time we got to Vancouver to actually film this thing, we were pretty well prepared, and we knew our pyro cues – to keep it as safe as possible.

"The idea was originally that we would cover the hits. But it was, like, 'Well, that's already been done – let's bring a narrative to it, a thread, and make it interesting.'"

Nimród decided to make the role of Trip a non-verbal one – Dane DeHaan wasn't required to speak any dialogue. Instead, it's the songs that drive the movie forward.

"This is a Metallica film, first and foremost," he says. "The last thing I wanted to do was step on some awesome songs with dialogue."

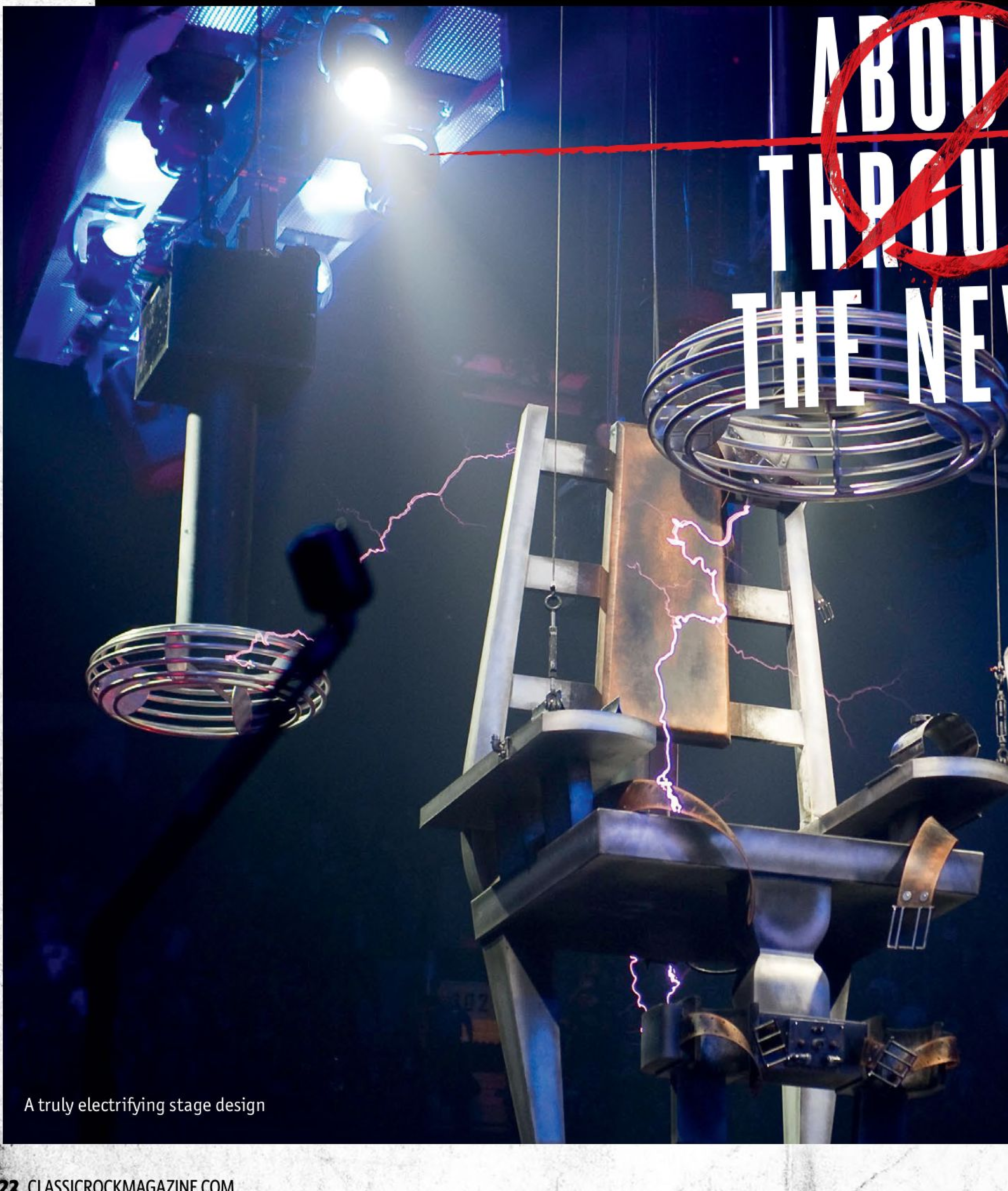
It sure as hell looks and sounds impressive, but it still doesn't answer the question: what is *Through The Never*?

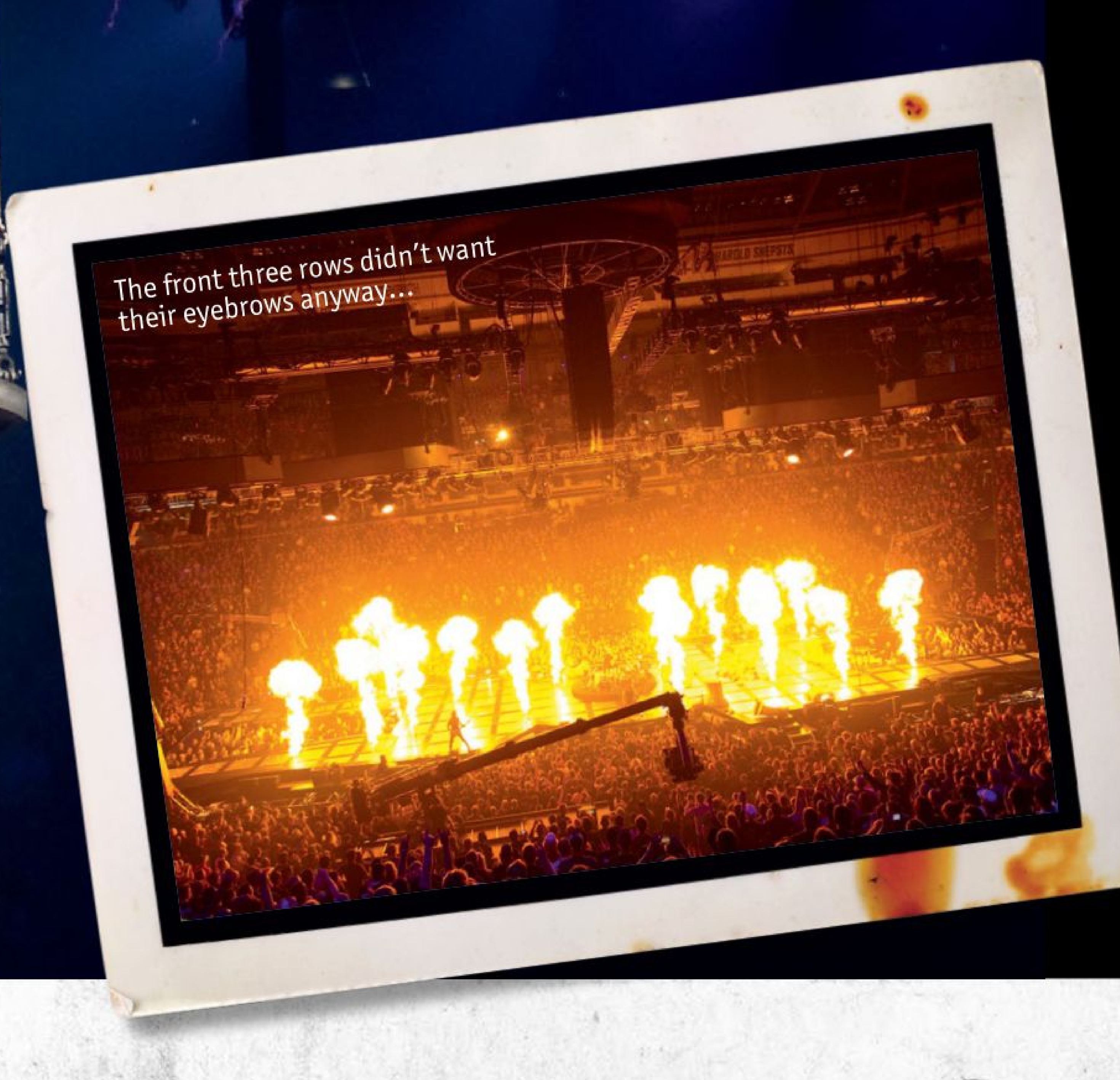
The answer to that is that it's a concert movie and an action movie and an extended promo video for 30 years of Metallica as one of the planet's great live bands, all delivered in glorious IMAX 3D. The two aspects of the film dovetail nicely – performance footage is intercut with some properly OTT stunts, while an apocalyptic air hangs heavily over proceedings. Of course, whether it truly works or not will be decided by several million Metallica fans around the world. And they're the toughest judges of all – just look at *Lulu*, still twitching on the cross to which it was nailed.

"The backlash can't be any worse than for the Lou Reed album," says Robert Trujillo. "But you gotta be able to take chances to make yourself happy. If people come along for the ride, that's great. If not, then, well, we'll meet at another destination."

The crowd obey their masters

10 THINGS WE LOVED ABOUT THROUGH THE NEVER


A truly electrifying stage design


The front three rows didn't want their eyebrows anyway…

ROSS HALFIN

Trip comes face to face with this guy as chaos reigns around him

Justice is gone

1 THEIR ENTRANCE

Those Metallica boys sure know how to arrive in style! An undeniably cool sequence opens the movie as we get a quick glimpse of each member, James grinning through the window of a snazzy car, Kirk bandaging up his hand that's bloodsoaked from too much riffing, Rob bass playing, crab walking and shaking the venue's walls in front of a stack of amps and Lars… umm… walking down a corridor looking a bit grumpy. Nice one Lars.

2 IT'S GOT A PROPER PLOT

More than just your bog-standard concert movie, *Through The Never* contains a full narrative running throughout. Trip has got to get a package for the band while the gig rages on, he then gets caught up in all manner of trouble and has to fight his way out. What's in the package? Who knows! …and that's it really. Hey, we never said it was *Inception*!

3 ICONIC IMAGES.

Through The Never is a true celebration of Metallica's glorious past. The big screen is filled with old-school props that will make a fanboy squeal with delight. It's the *Ride The Lighting* electric chair! Look, it's Lady Liberty from *…And Justice For All*! Aren't they the graves from *Master Of Puppets*? Yes they are, people! What a treat.

4 THERE ARE LOADS OF KILLINGS

Violence? In a concert film?! Eh? Oh yes! This isn't *The Jonas Brothers: 3D Movie*! This is Metallica! So we get war, capital punishment, car crashes, and people drowning, being strung up and set fire to. Plus a heap of shit-kicking and brawling in the street. All in 3D too! Probably not an ideal first date movie if we're honest.

5 THERE'S A PROPER SCARY BADDIE

The main man pursuing our hero, and causing most of said violence, is a truly terrifying mix of *Friday The 13th*'s Jason Voorhees and Christopher Walken in *Sleepy Hollow*. Basically a massive bloke with a hammer, riding on a horse, who hangs people from lamp posts by the neck. Nice. Remember, don't have nightmares.

6 LOONIES

Even though there is a load of carnage going on outside the venue, the real action is happening inside its walls, and, arguably, the lunacy of a 'Tallica show has never been captured on film in such a first-hand perspective. From the pretty ladies grinding along during *Enter Sandman* to the grizzled, slam-dancing metalheads losing their shit as Kirk solos in front of them, the fans keep the excitement levels on top from beginning to end. The best extras since Ricky Gervais.

7 RARE TRACKS

Easy as it would have been for the band to play it safe and bust out all the big hits, they have stuck a few rarely heard, fan-favourite gems in there too. The title tracks of both *…And Justice For All* and *Ride The Lighting* put in extremely welcome appearances in all their full-length glory, sounding just as thrashingly massive as they ever did.

8 BEST. HORSE. CAMEO. EVER

One of the plot's highlights happens when Trip is starting to realise something is amiss: a lone horse wanders through the city streets, dragging a dead, fully armoured police officer behind him. Trip looks at him in pure confusion, and the horse stares back with a look that says, "Mate, it's about to go tits-up for you." Then he wanders off down the road, still pulling his former master. Sublime. Give that horse an Oscar… or at least a sugar lump.

9 TUNES

OBVIOUSLY! The pure glory of the Metallica back catalogue in full Dolby surround sound is ultimately the movie's biggest draw and selling point. You know the drill: *Creeping Death, Battery, Hit The Lights, One* and the rest all sounding loud, mean and brilliant. You'll struggle not to find yourself wanting to jump up, whirl your head and sing along. *Through The Never* may be the only film ever made where it's acceptable to stand up during it and scream *"DIE! DIE! DIE! DIE! DIE!"* at the screen… well, the only one that doesn't star The Wayans Brothers.

10 THERE ARE NO BAND COUNSELLING SESSIONS IN IT

Thank fuck for that, right?

James: hot but not bothered

THE BEST OF 2013

Metallica

"PEOPLE HAVE SLAGGED THIS BAND FOR THIRTY YEARS. WE'VE HEARD IT ALL BY NOW."

So says Metallica drummer **Lars Ulrich** after the release of *Through The Never*, the band's polarising venture into the world of movies. Still, at least James Hetfield thinks it's "awsum".

Words: **Dave Ling**

Hard cases: the band stand by their latest project, despite some criticism.

Metallica's big-screen debut was always going to split the vote. A movie of the world's biggest metal band playing live, in 3D, on a giant IMAX screen? Brilliant idea! But it'll be broken up by bizarre sub-*Mad Max* action scenes featuring a mute roadie being chased through an apocalyptic city by a bloke on a horse? Er, pass the *Police Academy 5* DVD…

While you have to admire their unbending mission to do whatever the hell they want and damn the consequences, the reality is that *Through The Never* wasn't one of Metallica's better ideas. If the howls of protest and derision from sections of their fanbase weren't proof enough, the box office returns tell a sorry story – the self-financed film, which cost a rumoured $30 milllion to make, recouped just $3.2 million in its first three weeks of release.

Coming on the back of the poorly received *Lulu*, it's the latest polarising move from a band who once seemed utterly infallible. It begs the question: why, 30-plus years into their career, are Metallica laying their reputation on the line? Is it part of a midlife crisis? Drummer Lars Ulrich is on hand to shoot down such theories.

Whose idea was *Through The Never*?
It goes way back, more than 15 years – even before *Some Kind Of Monster*. IMAX asked if we'd like to shoot a 45-minute concert specialist movie, but it was too much of an undertaking. Four years ago we were in Belfast and [co-manager] Peter Mensch brought the idea up again. We always knew we wanted to do a big fuck-off movie. Peter said it was about time to make that big fuck-off movie a reality.

Beyond making a "big fuck-off movie", what was your original mission statement for the film?
In our band, nothing's ever that black and white. Things just morph. Someone says 'A', then someone says 'B' and 'C' follows. All we can do is try to prevent it from derailing into something ridiculous – which we know some people think it has [with this movie]. You just hang on for dear life.

So what was the thing you sought most to achieve?
If there was a mission statement, it was to use the 3D technology to almost take the viewer up onto the stage with us. We wanted to make the film audience a part of Metallica.

If I asked you how much it cost to make, you'd probably tell me to fuck off?
I've too much respect for you for that. It's certainly… er… a little pricey. Bigger than anything we've done. There was the film, the stage, the marketing. But if I told you it cost 17 Smarties to make, you either enjoy the movie or you don't. Is that any different to a film that cost 17,000 Smarties? It's just not that interesting.

Well, 30 million Smarties would be a substantial amount of confectionery to claw back.
Yeah, but that number is a wild exaggeration. It wasn't anything like that number of Smarties. Of course our goal is to eventually break even, whether by T-shirts or DVDs or album sales.

And is that realistic?
I think so, even if I end up flogging some leftover DVDs from the trunk of my car. The Smarties should balance out in the next five years, but we're not super stressed about it. I can tell you that we had the balls to self-finance in order to retain control. We didn't want outsiders telling us to include more of Trip [Dane DeHaan] and less of James Hetfield, or to tone something down. And I can confirm for you that it's more expensive to make movies at this scale than it is to make records.

The part towards the end when the lighting rig collapses, roadies clear away the debris of the *…And Justice For All* statue and the show continues over again in stripped-down form is great.
Yeah, we thought so.

It would've been a nice *Keystone Cops*-style touch to have had the hate mob chase Trip up on to the stage, over it and off again.
[Guffaws] *Blazing Saddles*…

Except you probably couldn't have got the horse up there…
I'm sure we'd have found a way. No, that didn't come up but now I've got an idea for a DVD extra. Where were you a year ago? Why were you not in on that meeting?

"We'll break even on the film, even if I end up flogging leftover DVDs from the trunk of my car."
Lars Ulrich

The band's stage show in *Through The Never* is truly superb. The guy on the horse? Not so much.

There are a few rumours doing the rounds. We'd like to throw them at you.
[Quietly] Please. Go on…

The first one is that James Hetfield hates the movie.
That's untrue. A couple of days ago James sent me a text saying he'd just watched it right through. He spells the word 'awesome' as 'A, W, S, U, M'.

Second, you sounded out David Fincher, who directed *Se7en*, but he was too expensive. Which is why Nimród Antal, the man behind *Vacancy* and *Predators*, got the job.
Um… there's a truth to the front part of that one, but not the latter. I did speak to David Fincher. I know him and we had some conversations about it, but money never came up. That's not the reason.

There is a rumour that during the final edit, you realised that the balance was tipped too much towards the offstage footage, and you ended up running around like a loony trying to put more songs back in.
That's also untrue, though I do run around like a madman because I drink so much tea. If anything, we were trying to include as much of the narrative and of Dane DeHaan as possible. He was much more interesting to watch than we were. We squeezed just about every frame of him into the final edit. When this movie comes out on DVD in six months, there will be no extras of Dane.

***Through The Never* is 90 minutes long, which is quite short by modern movie standards. Is it because that's the limit of people's boredom threshold?**
Aaaaah, it wasn't that, it… [Considering his reply] We play close to two hours each night and the hardest thing was trying to find the balance between the two worlds.

We never get to find out what's in the bag. Does that leave the door open for a sequel?
If people think so, but that was not the intention of the movie's ambiguous ending.

Are you aware of the bag's contents?
No. I don't think he [DeHaan] is completely sure, either. He looked in the bag but I never asked him what it was. I will ask him someday. Who knows if there will be a sequel? It's not on the cards right now.

Can you put hand on heart and say you enjoyed the process?
I liked the creative part. Listen, that's the reason we do any of these things – because the creativity is so rewarding. For our own stability, our survival, we have to do these crazy things. To lock into the same grind of doing the same thing over and over again… I don't think I'd be sitting here and talking to you right now. Some of these other bands [of Metallica's stature] will do an album and a tour and then take, like, five years off. Fuck taking five years off. We just go and do a movie, or make our own festival, or hang out with Lou Reed for six months.

That's the simplistic view anyway. At some point there has to be a conversation about how to share it with people. We are involved with every element. I can tell you that Metallica picked that image for the film poster, and not some marketing guy. We can look you, and our fans, in the eye and say – for better or for worse – that comes from us. You wanna applaud it, fine. If you wanna slag it, that's fine too. We take full responsibility either way.

> ***"For our own stability, for our survival, we have to do these crazy things."***
> ***Lars Ulrich***

The feedback so far has been mixed to say the least. This morning's *Telegraph* gave it two out of five.
The last time I looked we had 82 per cent on Rotten Tomatoes – that's a website that takes all the reviews and balances them out. So at that point, 82 per cent were positive. And if you want to go to the next level, there's Metacritic.com. Your Rotten Tomato rating comes from bloggers and things like Dave Ling's moviesite.com. Metacritic is based on *The Guardian*, *The Telegraph* and *The New York Times*. I think we have 64 per cent on there, which is very good.

It's interesting you know all of that, given that Metallica always claim not to give a shit about the opinion of critics.
Yeah. But we do know where they live. Seriously, people have slagged this band for the better part of 30 years and we've more or less heard it all by now.

The biggest criticism is…
[Interrupting] That it should've been an all-concert movie. [Nodding] I hear that a lot. People want to see more of us? That's great. But I don't wanna see more of myself or

The *…And Justice For All* moments are the highlights of the movie.

James Hetfield. I think it's more interesting to see Dane DeHaan.

What do you say to those that believe you should be making a new record and not indulging rock-star whims?
If making a film is a rock-star whim, then 'Guilty, your honour'. Personally, I don't believe that in signing up to be in a band, you limit yourself to making records. We express ourselves however we see fit. Being restricted to making a new record every three years just doesn't interest me. Where in the manual does it say that has to be so?

***Lulu*, this film… are Metallica having a midlife crisis as a band?**
[Frowns and falls silent for a few moments] Aaaaaaah, if you really want me to answer that, then I will never try to talk anyone out of any opinion they have of Metallica. Rumours, facts… sure, fine… But that theory doesn't really resonate with me.

We don't expect you to agree. It's more a case of whether you understand why that conclusion could be reached.
If somebody wants to think that, then sure – I'll play along. I don't mind.

You won't deny the accusation?
Not at all. People can think what they like, but we're in a good place. I still love *Death Magnetic* and we will eventually make more music. We had over a thousand ideas which we've narrowed down to a hundred or so… now it's a case of connecting the dots. ❼

Through The Never will be released on DVD on January 27. The soundtrack album is out now.

ROSS HALFIN/PICTUREHOUSE x6

Awsum: James Hetfield tearing it up during the concert footage.

HAVE METALLICA BLOWN IT?

Yes

The metal titans have now drifted too far away from their roots, reckons Ken McIntyre.

"What would Zebraman say?" That's what I'm thinking as I sit here in an enormous, orb-shaped movie theatre, strapped in a seat that seriously feels like it's on the edge of a cliff, wearing plastic 3D goggles, watching Metallica's roadie running around doing errands or something. It cost me $22.50 to be here. In much better days, I could've bought three copies of *The $5.98* EP and still had money left over for a copy of *Raw*.

Metallica are now so far removed from the reality of rock'n'roll that they think a bloated, multi-million dollar 3D concert video with bonus narrative nonsense is really the best way to, as they keep fucking telling us, "Experience what we're really all about". Dude, this theatre is on the second floor of a furniture store in the suburbs. That's a long goddamn way from Ruthie's Inn. Or a parking lot in Maryland in 1986.

Zebraman, you may remember, was the glammy idiot in crucial rock-doc *Heavy Metal Parking Lot*, getting wasted before the Judas Priest show, who neatly sums up the experience: "Heavy metal fuckin' rules." That guy was too stupid to have discovered Metallica yet, but still, he's exactly the kind of long-haired zero that made Metallica the heavy metal juggernauts they became.

I can't imagine Zebraman sitting through *Through The Never*. He'd dismiss it just like he did with punk rock. "It doesn't belong on this world," he would say, punching the sky, "it belongs on fuckin' Mars, man."

Hand him a copy of *Lulu*, Metallica's recent art-prog collaboration with Lou Reed? "Circle of shit," he'd mutter with disdain, before wandering off in search of some weed.

You, gentle reader, may have grown out of your Zebraman phase – maybe you've got kids or a mortgage and you've traded in your denim vest for sensible shoes – but he's still out there, man, and he deserves better. Heavy metal was born in parking lots, and that's where it should die, in a hail of blood, vomit, beer and van fumes, not in embarrassing box-office receipts or impenetrable pet projects.

No

The films, the collaborations, the festivals – it's kicking against expectation, says Dave Everley.

Have Metallica *what?* Okay, yeah, I can see where you're coming from. But you're wrong.

Let's get this out of the way upfront. No one's defending *Through The Never* as anything other than an expensive folly (though the live footage is eye-popping). And, sure, you'll be hard-pushed to find anyone willing to stand up for *Lulu* in court (though *Junior Dad* is one helluva song, all 19-and-a-half minutes of it).

But here's the reality of the situation: Metallica haven't blown it, unless by 'blowing it' you mean daring to kick against the constraints of what it means to be a mega-successful metal band. What other group would invest several million dollars of their own money in an attempt to shake up the format of the tired old rock'n'roll film? What other band would have the brass balls to approach rock's biggest bastard, Lou Reed, to make a double album based on a pair of 19th-century German plays? Not fucking Slayer, that's for sure.

Sure, mad experimentation and great music aren't necessarily the same thing. But everything Metallica do has a kernel of honesty at its heart – a mission to bust down the walls they've had built around them. And let's face it, when they do play to the gallery – as on 2008's *Death Magnetic* – the results aren't too shabby.

Fact is, Metallica have been 'blowing it' for the past 30 years. Ask someone who remembers *Kill 'Em All* being released – it was laughed out of town. They got it in the neck for slapping acoustic guitars on *Ride The Lightning*, and stripping away the bass and inventing prog-metal on *…And Justice For All*. Even the *Black Album* had its critics.

The films, the art-rock projects, the vanity festivals with eclectic bills – they're all part of the same bigger picture. Here is a band who can afford to take chances, who are willing to fuck with their own formula, who aren't content to press play-and-repeat on what they've done before until everyone dies of boredom. They might not always get it right, but it's a damn sight more interesting than the alternative. And if you can't hack that, well, there's a new Slayer album coming next year.

Metallica get a glimpse of the future on the Yangtze River

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

METALLICA

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND

WORDS DOM LAWSON
PICS ROSS HALFIN

THIRTY-TWO YEARS SINCE THEIR FORMATION, METALLICA HAVE ROLLED INTO CHINA FOR THE FIRST TIME. THAT'S NOT ALL – THEY'VE GOT A MOVIE, A RECORD LABEL, A FESTIVAL AND EVEN NEW MUSIC ON THE CARDS TOO...

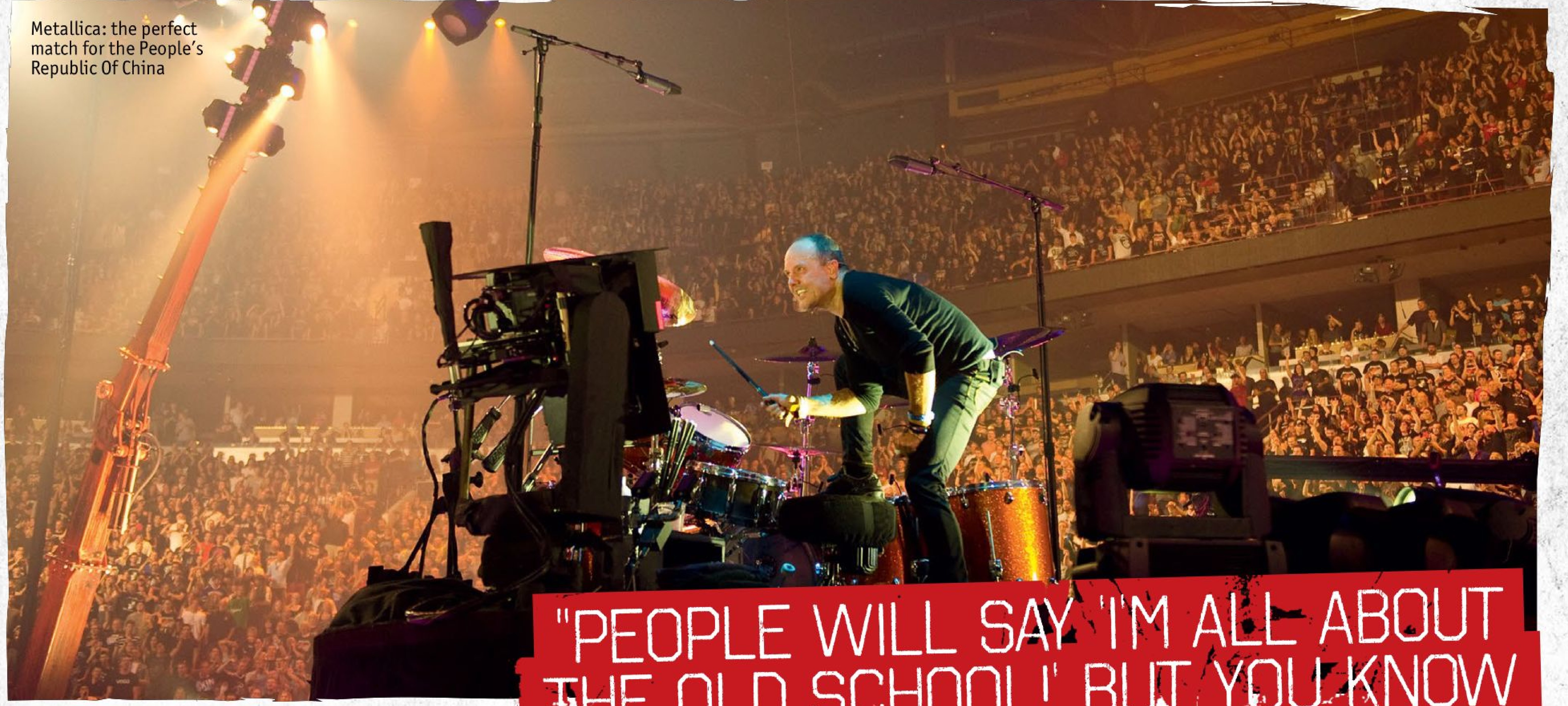
Welcome to China. In terms of population, this is the biggest country on the planet. In terms of heavy metal, of course, there is no bigger band or more consistently unassailable force than Metallica. And here they are, performing in front of a sold-out Mercedes-Benz Arena in the vast city of Shanghai, spreading their immortal gospel of turbocharged rock'n'roll and resolute riff worship to a territory that, only a few years ago, would have been an unthinkable target for even the most successful band our genre has ever produced. Sometimes all it takes to batter down seemingly impenetrable walls is an instinctive urge to think big and act bigger. Metallica in China. It makes perfect sense.

"AT THE END OF THE DAY WE ARE ARTISTS, WE ARE EXPLORERS..."

JAMES ON BOLDLY GOING WHERE NO BAND HAVE BEEN BEFORE

James and Kirk test out some new licks

Kirk and James have mixed emotions backstage



Metallica: the perfect match for the People's Republic Of China

"PEOPLE WILL SAY 'I'M ALL ABOUT THE OLD SCHOOL!' BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? WE'VE TAKEN THAT ON"

ROB ON PLAYING *KILL 'EM ALL* IN ITS ENTIRETY EARLIER THIS YEAR

Like most years in the life of metal's supreme overlords, 2013 proved itself to be a monumental and unforgettable one. At the time of writing, Metallica unveiled *Through The Never*, their first full-length feature film and a truly groundbreaking one at that: executed in eye-popping 3D and with a thick vein of invention and artistic alacrity throbbing through its deafening core, this movie could only have been made by a band that has repeatedly demonstrated its fearlessness and ambition over the last three decades. An exhilarating and yet subtly thoughtful combination of incendiary live footage, it depicts Metallica in their supreme 21st-century pomp performing on the most elaborate and technologically daring indoor stage the entertainment world has ever seen. With its bold but poignant narrative focusing on the behind-the-scenes adventures of a roadie named Trip – portrayed by US actor Dane DeHaan – *Through The Never* is quite unlike any rock'n'roll movie ever released and looks certain to be another huge milestone in the already mindblowing story of our world's most prominent protagonists. Most bands, even those that share Metallica's lust for new experiences and unerring sense of occasion, would probably be satisfied with releasing their own boundary-smashing feature film. But this is Metallica and their future looks as hectic and haughty as their recent past. Having spent the last few years immersed in all manner of projects, from their controversial collaboration with Lou Reed to the birth of their very own Orion Festival in Atlantic City and on to those incredible, star-studded 30th anniversary shows in San Francisco, the band's metaphorical foot remains firmly planted on the accelerator. With the wind, as ever, in their sails, Metallica have further plans for Orion, which looks set to take place in Detroit next year. They have also started their own record label, Blackened Recordings, through which the *Through The Never* soundtrack will soon be released and which should provide a launchpad for the first album of new material since 2008's *Death Magnetic* at some point during 2014. As bassist Rob Trujillo explains in an exclusive interview with *Metal Hammer*, being in Metallica – and, indeed, being a fan of the band – continues to be an "edge-of-your-seat experience" as they notch up yet more huge milestones in their extraordinary history.

"China was *really* interesting," he says. "We played in Shanghai, and you have this ultra-modern, surrealistic skyline busting out like *Bladerunner* and then, right around the corner, you have the most shanty old-school Chinese neighbourhood. It trips you out a little bit. We took a sidecar trip on these World War II motorbikes and went around the city, so we really got into the thick of it and that was fun! But at the same time we couldn't play about 10 of our best songs. Ha ha! We couldn't play *Master Of Puppets*, we couldn't play *One*. You send your list of what you plan on playing and it's either 'yay' or 'nay' and there's no explanation. It's basically about the lyrical content. We couldn't play *Battery*, but we *could* play *Blackened*. It was pretty random. In the end, we just figured that we should play by the rules and have a good time with these people who rarely have the opportunity to experience music like this, and then try to come back and play those songs in the future. China's changing and it's growing, but it's not quite there yet."

Tour artwork from Metallica's Mexico City show last year

Such is the significance of Metallica's long-awaited arrival in China that the band made a point of filming and documenting their trip for use in a forthcoming documentary. Ever mindful of their status as heavy music's most successful and celebrated representatives, they seem determined to build, strengthen and sustain links with previously unthinkable new territories, reflecting the band's collective belief that, as Lars Ulrich stated during a press conference held in Shanghai during the band's visit, "there has been a passion and an appreciation and a longing for this moment that is really special.

"We figured that if we filmed and shared an experience, then we could get to more [people in China] and get a next-level relationship between Metallica and China that could last for decades," the drummer continued. "Being here and feeling the energy and excitement, the idea came up to celebrate it and to try to document it. We're excited about that and we think that there is something cool that will come out of it. Whatever that is, we're not quite sure yet, but we'll do our best to make it shareable and worth everybody's while."

"I was told that people would be sitting down and clapping and very polite," frontman James Hetfield added during the press conference. "And that would be fine as well, but we were very glad to see people singing the words and joining in and becoming part of the show, which is what we really love."

Just as an explosion of interest in and enthusiasm for our music and its culture has begun to enable countries like India and Indonesia to become more active members of the global metal community, so the recent opening of commercial and cultural doors in China seems to mark a monumental change in the way that metal and its importance to those who love it are perceived. By performing in Shanghai, Metallica have provided a hugely significant service for the entire metal scene, demonstrating to the authorities in China that, despite their undoubted reservations,

James gets in touch with his inner child

Rob wows Shanghai

Kirk in familiar territory

"WE ARE DOING THIS FOR OURSELVES AND IF YOU DON'T ENJOY IT THEN... DON'T!"

PAPA HET DEFINITELY HAS THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

the world of heavy metal is not something to be feared. Instead, the powers that be have hopefully now witnessed the vast positive impact of heavy music – not just in commercial terms but also in terms of the way it brings people together in a celebration of energy, community and inspiration.

"Oh, absolutely!" Rob Trujillo agrees. "It's such a great opportunity and it's also a great challenge, because a lot of these places probably wouldn't have been able to handle a show like this in the past. The last time Metallica tried to play in Indonesia there was a riot and there were a lot of problems. The infrastructure in these places needs to be much more solid. But we didn't have those problems in Asia this time around so it's getting better. In China, we went in there with the music and we weren't going in to bring any political or religious angle. Some bands don't wanna deal with it that way and they wanna go in and make a political statement, and I understand that, but sometimes the best political statement is made through your music. That's what's important to us, and the fans feed off that. They really embraced the moment. There was a lot of magic in there. We feed off that, so I'm happy to say that we'll be getting over to Asia a lot more than once every 10 years now."

There is something uniquely admirable about the way that Metallica – a band, lest we forget, who are already so unfeasibly massive that they have no pressing need to win new fans – continue to exhibit such enthusiasm for spreading what Rob describes as "the gospel of rock'n'roll and heavy metal". As a result, the release of *Through The Never* seems much less like a perfunctory cash-in on their existing popularity than yet another demonstration of their unerring creative ambitions and collective desire to reach out to people around the world, offering fans both old and new a unique and synapse-frazzling glimpse into Metallica World. Presented in eye-mangling 3D and with its refreshingly original blend of live footage and dramatic narrative, *Through The Never* isn't just another wildly ambitious project from a band that never seem to run out of new challenges to take on, it's also a very purposeful tool in their ongoing drive to reach as many potential new converts as possible, from Shanghai to Santiago and Anchorage to Adelaide.

"We certainly hope that this movie, this new challenge, will break down more doors and get us to more people," states Rob. "In general terms, in the places where Metallica are more well known, there are plenty of people who aren't fans yet, so hopefully with this unique 3D experience they'll embrace the band and check us out live or check *this* show out live when we take it on the road in the future. Hopefully they'll jump onboard. The film could be really good for that. I always say that being in Metallica is a real edge-of-your-seat existence. When you do something like have a creative, experimental experience with Lou Reed, it's a real challenge but something we really enjoyed. Obviously the fans are gonna be like 'What is this?' and they might be a bit confused. Same thing with the film project, they'll go 'OK, what are they up to now? Can't you just make an album?' I understand that. But at the same time, that's what makes Metallica special over all these years. Whether it's the *S&M* record, playing with an orchestra, the 30th anniversary shows or any of these things. We just jump in the water and start swimming, you know?"

James recently explained the motivations and reasoning behind his band's decision to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the world of big-screen filmmaking:

"Over 10 years ago, IMAX came to us and said. 'We want to capture the energy of a Metallica show!'" he recalled. "At that time they were doing National Geographic type of things, like finding the Titanic or climbing Everest. We felt honoured but it never really happened until recently when a couple of ideas combined. We've been wanting to do a movie to capture the best of the Metallica stage that we have built. All the people who haven't seen Metallica, from *Kill 'Em All* to now, we have all the props and crazy stage, the crosses from *Master Of Puppets*, the coffins from *Death Magnetic* and just all of the things that we've done over the years. We wanted to make the movie even more different so we added a storyline to it. I've seen it and I am absolutely proud of it. I think it was a big risk for us. Well, everything good usually *is*. But it's totally worth it. If it breaks even one day, it's totally worth it to have this thing as a part of history,

Metallica fire up Shanghai

"OUR WAY OF DOING THINGS IS TO JUMP INTO UNEXPLORED CREATIVE ENDEAVOURS WITH NO SAFETY NET"

LARS ULRICH'S IMAGINATION KNOWS NO LIMITS

where people can see the best of Metallica. Hopefully it becomes a part of everyone's music or movie library."

"The new stage had been built and management had an idea to put together a concert film that was really *just* a concert," Rob explains. "We checked out the stage plot and saw the layout for the band and we thought that it was really exciting, but we wanted a narrative. We wanted something different, like maybe taking a page from the Pink Floyd model or Led Zeppelin's *The Song Remains The Same* but bringing it more into the Metallica realm."

Their exploits in the world of cinema are by no means the only endeavours propelling Metallica forward in 2013. Their new record label, Blackened Recordings, is a venture that once again confirms the thrash legends' determination to move with the times and embrace the limitless possibilities offered up by the ever-evolving landscape of the modern music industry. According to Rob, the nature of Blackened's business has yet to be clearly defined, but the project fits perfectly with Metallica's endless passion for diving fearlessly into the unknown.

"It could end up being one of many things," he tells us. "Obviously the first thing we do will be the soundtrack for *Through The Never*. It's new territory but it's also very exciting because there are a lot of possibilities. People ask 'Are you gonna bring on any new bands or how is it gonna work?' Well, the answer is that we actually don't know what direction Blackened will take us in, but we're all very excited at the endless possibilities. But I've got to say that our next challenge is pretty obvious! We've got to make a record!"

Five years have passed since the release of Metallica's last studio album, *Death Magnetic*. Since then, the band have been extremely busy with all manner of other projects and tours, but even the most patient of fans must now be wondering exactly when they will return to the studio and create a follow-up. The good news is that Metallica have clearly defined plans to continue the songwriting process that began in earnest during 2012 but which was abruptly curtailed due to the sheer magnitude of the work involved to bring *Through The Never* to fruition.

"We had a bit of momentum last year where we actually got together a few times and had a lot of fun jamming," says Rob. "There are a lot of great ideas. To me, *Death Magnetic* was the launchpad. We had five children born during the *Death Magnetic* era within the band. I had a couple of kids, Kirk had a couple and Lars had a child, so there was a lot going on and the whole experience was fairly long-winded but it was a powerful one. We learned a lot about each other and our engineer and about working with Rick Rubin. This next record, I believe, is gonna be very special. We had so much fun jamming. We have an *overwhelming* number of riffs. Every time James Hetfield turns a tone knob or tunes a guitar, he comes up with an incredible riff. He has, like, 800 riffs! Even his worst riff would be something most bands wish they could have!"

"We've gone through maybe one 10th of the material on our riff CDs," James Hetfield told Loudwire.com recently. "We've got enough for an album, we just haven't had enough time to dial in and start whittling it into these masterpieces, hopefully! I want it done yesterday and this movie is keeping us pretty busy at this point and it's taking a lot of time and effort. We've been touring some obscure places.

"I guess what we're trying to do is pay for this movie, so touring

SLAVE NEW WORLD

WHY MORE AND MORE ARTISTS ARE HEADING OFF TO PASTURES NEW...

The financial crisis that struck the world in 2007 was considered the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s, impacting all industries – including music. Touring had become the main source of income for bands since the piracy boom at the turn of the millennium, but the credit crunch meant touring became more and more expensive, and artists had to start thinking very carefully about where they were going to be and for how long.

"Look, I'm not an economist, but I have a degree, so it helps," long-time Metallica manager Cliff Burnstein told *Wall Street Journal* in 2011. "You have to ask yourself, 'What's the best time to be doing what, when and where?' Nobody is looking to make a foreign-exchange trade to make money, but you don't want to be a loser. Over the next few years, the dollar will be stronger and the euro weaker, and if that's the case, I want to take advantage of that by playing more of these [European] shows now, because they will be more profitable for us."

And of course, Metallica returned to Europe in 2012 performing their biggest-selling, self-titled album in its entirety. Nicely done. But with Europe looking more and more financially unstable, the Metallica manager has been turning his gaze towards territories with stronger economies. And this year, the metal masters haven't set foot in Europe save for one performance at Roskilde Festival and a brief appearance at the Cannes Film Festival, but they've toured through Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. A sign of things to come, perhaps?

"We're a US export the same way Coca-Cola is," he admitted. "We look for the best markets to go to. Right now Indonesia is on my watch list."

Kirk Hammett takes a new world in his stride

Hetfield: riff and a prayer

Lars Ulrich looks towards a new musical dynasty

Rob Trujillo tunes into the East

"THERE HAS BEEN A PASSION AND A LONGING FOR THIS MOMENT THAT IS REALLY SPECIAL"

LARS ON METALLICA'S LIVE DEBUT IN CHINA

has been keeping us from getting in there and finishing the record."

When you're the biggest metal band of all time, it must be impossible to completely ignore the sheer weight of expectation as you plan your next creative move. With a support base that comprises several generations of fans, Metallica are in the complex position of being routinely confronted with wildly variable demands and desires from the potential audience for any new album. And while the general consensus seemed to be that *Death Magnetic* was a considerable return to good form, the less than positive reaction to *Lulu*, the band's deeply flawed collaboration with Lou Reed, suggests that the next Metallica album will be a pivotal one in their history.

In truth, it is obvious that Metallica are more than aware that their first five albums remain the ones that most fans regard with the greatest esteem; a fact strongly supported by setlists from the last decade or so, wherein very few songs from the post-*Black Album* era have usurped the band's unbeatable armoury of undisputed classics.

However, as they have consistently shown in recent times, Metallica are not about to bow to anyone or anything other than their own artistic impulses.

"At the end of the day we are artists, we are explorers," James told MSN Entertainment in August. "We're not out for attention. What other people think of me is none of my business. We are doing this for ourselves and if you don't enjoy it then… don't! We are not praying that you like it. That's not living! So, the fans we like to attract are the ones who are open-minded and like to experience new things in life."

"People will say 'I'm all about the old school and the early years!' but you know what? We've taken that on," Rob insists. "We played *Kill 'Em All* in its entirety this year. We performed the *Black Album* in its entirety for the first time last year and that was really fun. We've done the same thing with *Master Of Puppets*. I *do* get it. I love *Ride The Lightning* too, it's one of my favourite albums of all time, but I also love *Death Magnetic*, you know?"

All that remains now is for Metallica to reconvene in their jam room and start filtering and refining their new ideas with a view to constructing a new sonic landmark that will, whether more cynical fans like it or not, encapsulate the kind of band that Rob and his comrades want to be in 2014 and beyond. Thankfully, it seems that Metallica have already established a set of musical values for the new record that should, on paper at least, delight everyone from thrash diehards to younger fans weaned on the *Death Magnetic* era.

"For us, it's got to be about the groove," says Rob. "That's something that we all feel. The groove's imperative. The power of the groove is what makes the music great. Doing something new or different is always important too.

"At the end of the day we're making ourselves happy and feeling great about what we're doing. That is what's important to us. Hopefully the fans will embrace that too. We take our time to try to do what we need to do, but then we had five children during the last writing and recording cycle. That probably won't be the case this time! We're all very excited and we'll get there. 2014 is *definitely* about new Metallica music. It's an exciting time to be in this band!" ✠

***METALLICA: THROUGH THE NEVER* WAS RELEASED SEPTEMBER, 2013.**

THE THINGS THAT SHOULD (AND SHOULD NOT) BE

FIVE HUMBLE REQUESTS FOR THE NEXT METALLICA ALBUM…

WANT!

MASSIVE HETRIFFS

With all due respect to the other three members of the band, Metallica would not be anywhere as awesome without the mighty, meaty man-riffs of James Hetfield. Apparently he has hundreds of the fuckers ready to go. YAYUUUUUH!

DON'T WANT!

SNARE DRUM FAIL

Having sensibly glossed over the 10th anniversary of *St Anger*, Metallica would do well to avoid a repeat of the tinny clank that passed for a snare drum sound on their controversial 2003 album. Probably goes without saying, but still…

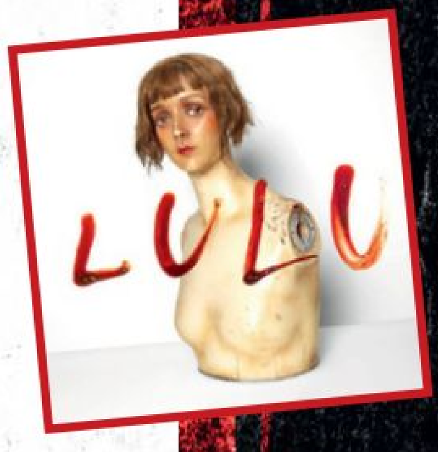
WANT!

THE SPIRIT OF THRASH

The best thing about *Death Magnetic* was that it proved that Metallica still have the energy to play at full throttle. Speed isn't the be all and end all, of course, but a dash of thrash never goes amiss. Whiplaaaaaash!

DON'T WANT!

LOU SODDING REED



Don't even let him into the studio, chaps. Seriously. And if you hear a confused old man mumbling outside the studio doors, alert the police and activate the anti-codger deterrent system.

WANT!

METALLIC-ANTHEMS!

As much as we love hearing all the old-school classics when Metallica play live, a few new singalong face-smashers would go down a treat this time round. Think *Seek And Destroy*. Think *Creeping Death*. Think *Sad But True*. Thanks in advance.

Lars: snarl & destroy

BACK TO THE FRONT

We headed to Canada for an exclusive, intimate look inside 'Worldwide', the biggest, baddest, box-office-bustingest tour of 2017. Welcome to the greatest show on earth, *babeeeeeeeh!*

Lars Ulrich is chomping on a toothpick, sipping tea and wondering how his band have managed to remain so famous. We are sitting backstage at Toronto's Rogers Centre, where Metallica will later perform before *52,000* people on the 18th North American date of their ongoing WorldWired tour. They first played the city in 1985, at a club show alongside W.A.S.P. and Armored Saint, before this stadium even existed.

"As you get further into your run, you almost get high from the fact that it's still even fucking happening," he marvels. "I may not be as critical as I was 10 years ago, because a bigger part of my outlook on everything now is, 'Holy fuck – I'm 53 years old. People still give a shit!' That just blows my mind."

The drummer is in good spirits today, welcoming us into Metallica's "tuning room" – a makeshift rehearsal area decorated with fan-made flags where the group warm up for 30 minutes each night – and peppering his conversation with phrases like "blowing my mind" and "mind-fuck" that are characteristic of his speech. The last time *Metal Hammer* spoke to the band was in New York in September 2016, two months before the release of their 10th studio album, *Hardwired… To Self-Destruct*. At the time, fans had only heard the spunky title track and were nervous about what to expect from the rest of the band's new material.

Since then, the record has gone platinum in the US and double-platinum in Canada – they'll actually receive commemorative sales plaques from their Canadian distributor tonight – as the WorldWired tour has rolled through a handful of major cities in Asia, South America, Europe and now North America. In October, it will finally reach the UK.

It's clear Lars focuses less on the detail of Metallica's performances these days, and more on gratitude for their continued success.

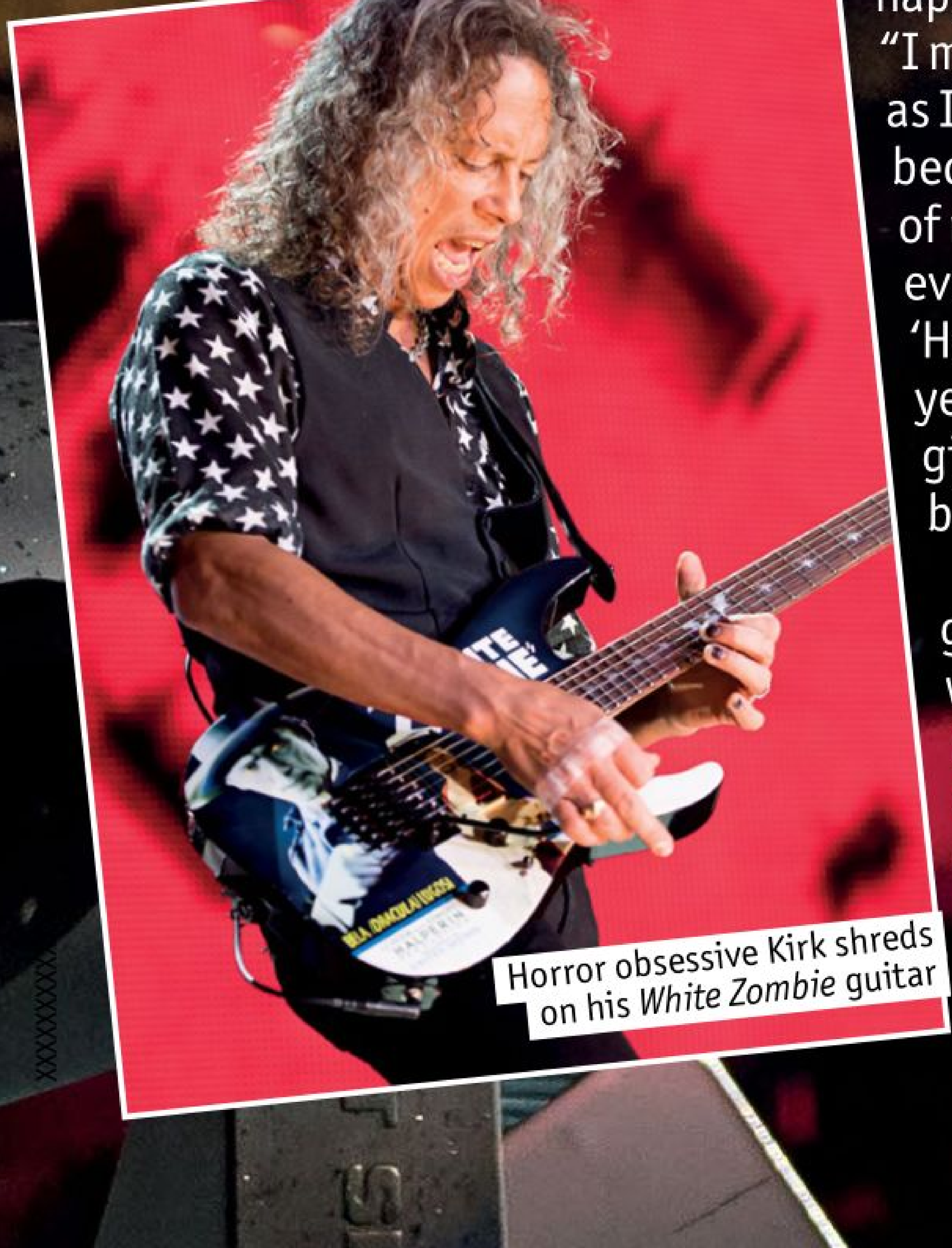
"When you start talking about the drum fill in song eight or something," he says, "does any of that really matter in relation to the fact that there's 52,000 people coming tonight, or my shoulder is still functioning, or we can all get dressed in the same room or share space?"

Hammer landed in Toronto just a few hours ago, but Metallica have been here for nearly a week. Long gone are the garage days when they'd get in the van or tour bus and drive from venue to venue together. Now in their 50s, they choose a series of "base camps" from which to operate – cities that act as temporary homes while they commute to and from shows in surrounding areas (prior to Toronto, they were based in New York City, Chicago and Miami).

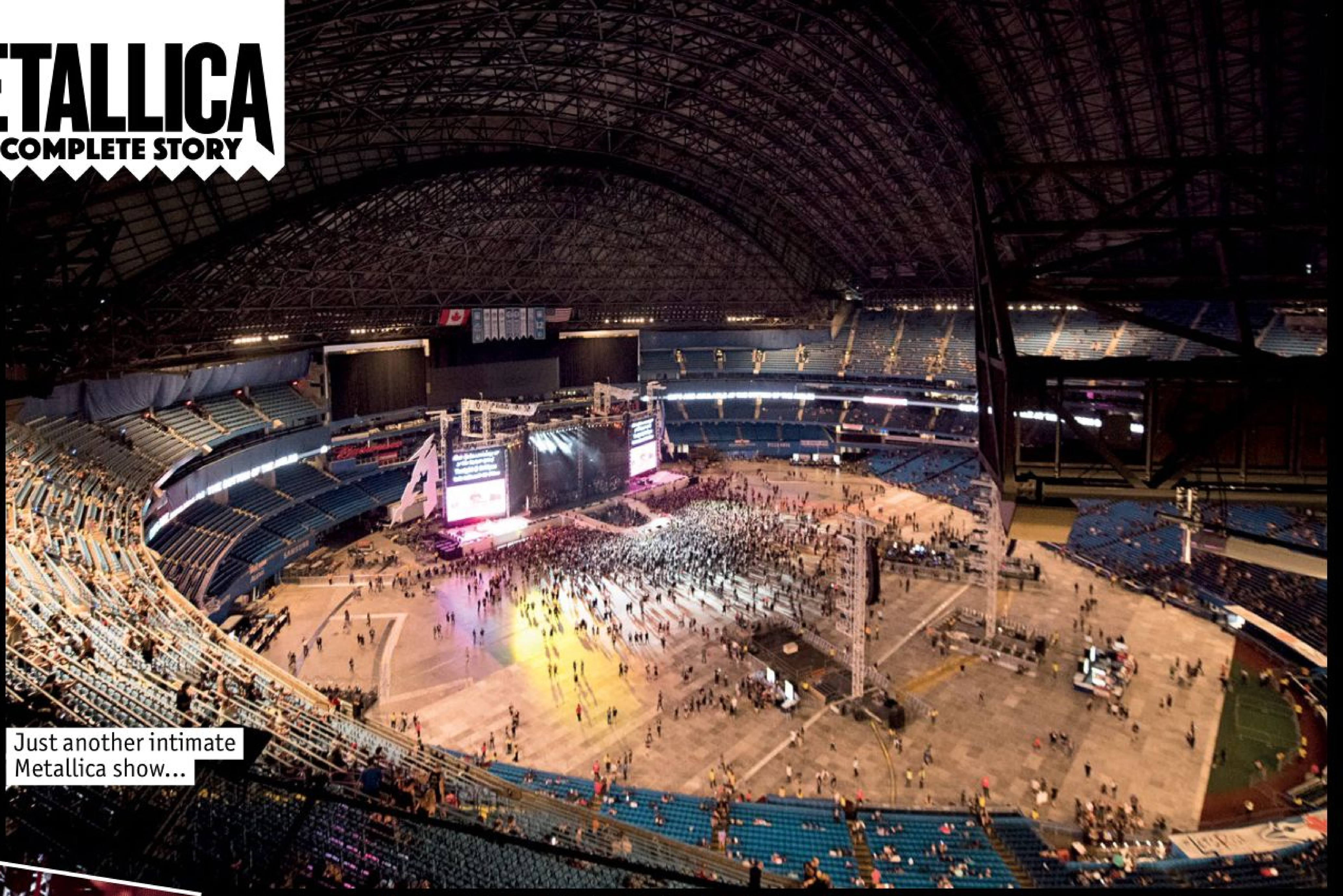
This strategy keeps them from tiring too quickly, mentally and physically, of the lifestyle and of each other. The 2004 documentary *Some Kind Of Monster* showed a band with potentially volatile chemistry, and while they've moved on massively since then, Lars is candid about the need to still maintain boundaries.

"We're very conscious of not crossing a burnout line," says Lars. "We set it up so that we have the slightest to smallest chance of the whole thing derailing.

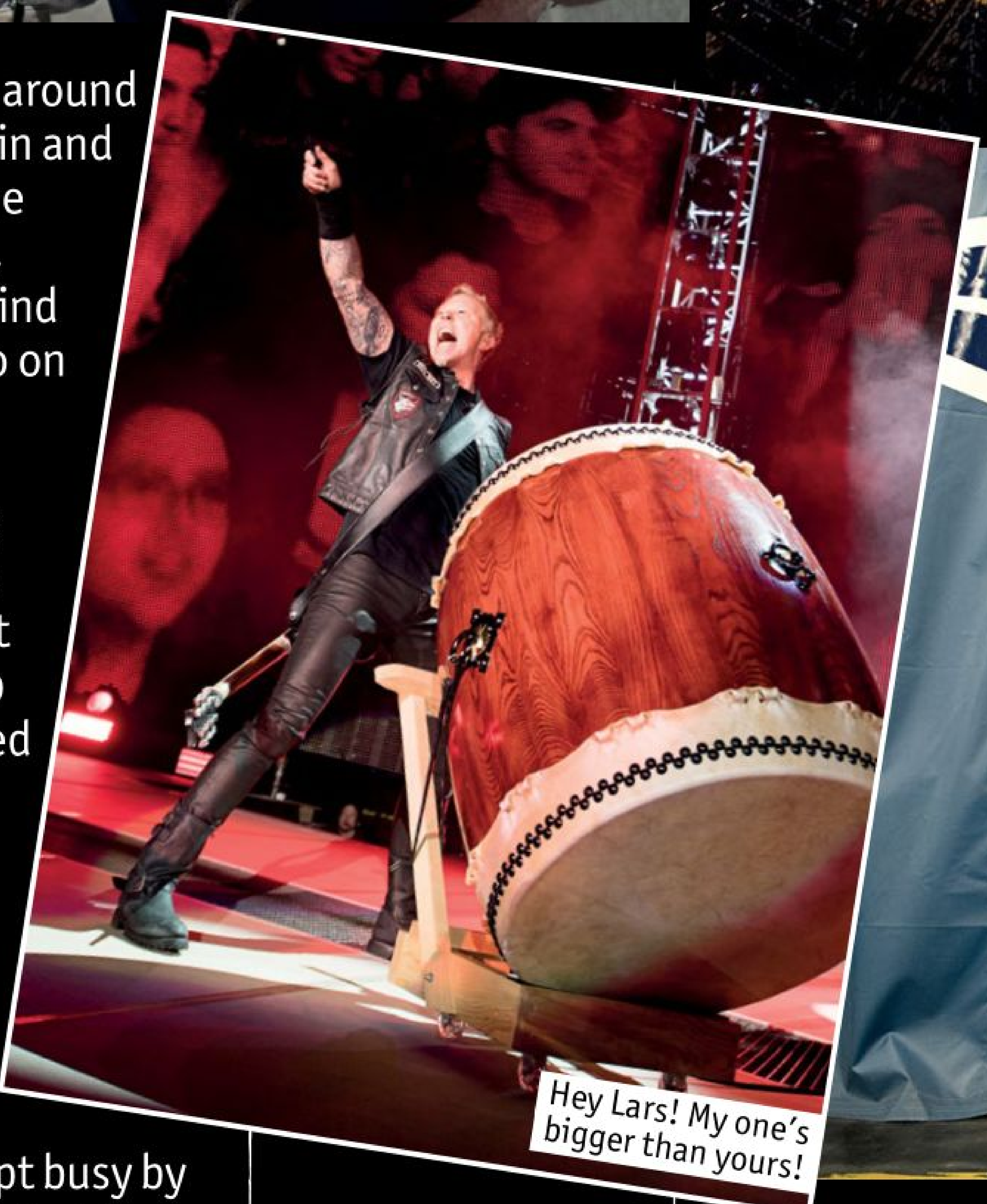
"HOLY FUCK, PEOPLE STILL GIVE A SHIT!"
LARS IS GRATEFUL PEOPLE CARE ABOUT METALLICA IN 2017


Horror obsessive Kirk shreds on his *White Zombie* guitar

Rob catches up with Ray Burton, father of the legendary Cliff



Just another intimate Metallica show…



Hey Lars! My one's bigger than yours!

The Rogers Centre is home to the Major League Baseball team the Toronto Blue Jays

"We're aware of the abysses around us, and if we can steer that train and keep it on the track – and at the same time hold onto the train, because the train also has a mind of its own – this thing could go on for 200-300 more years.

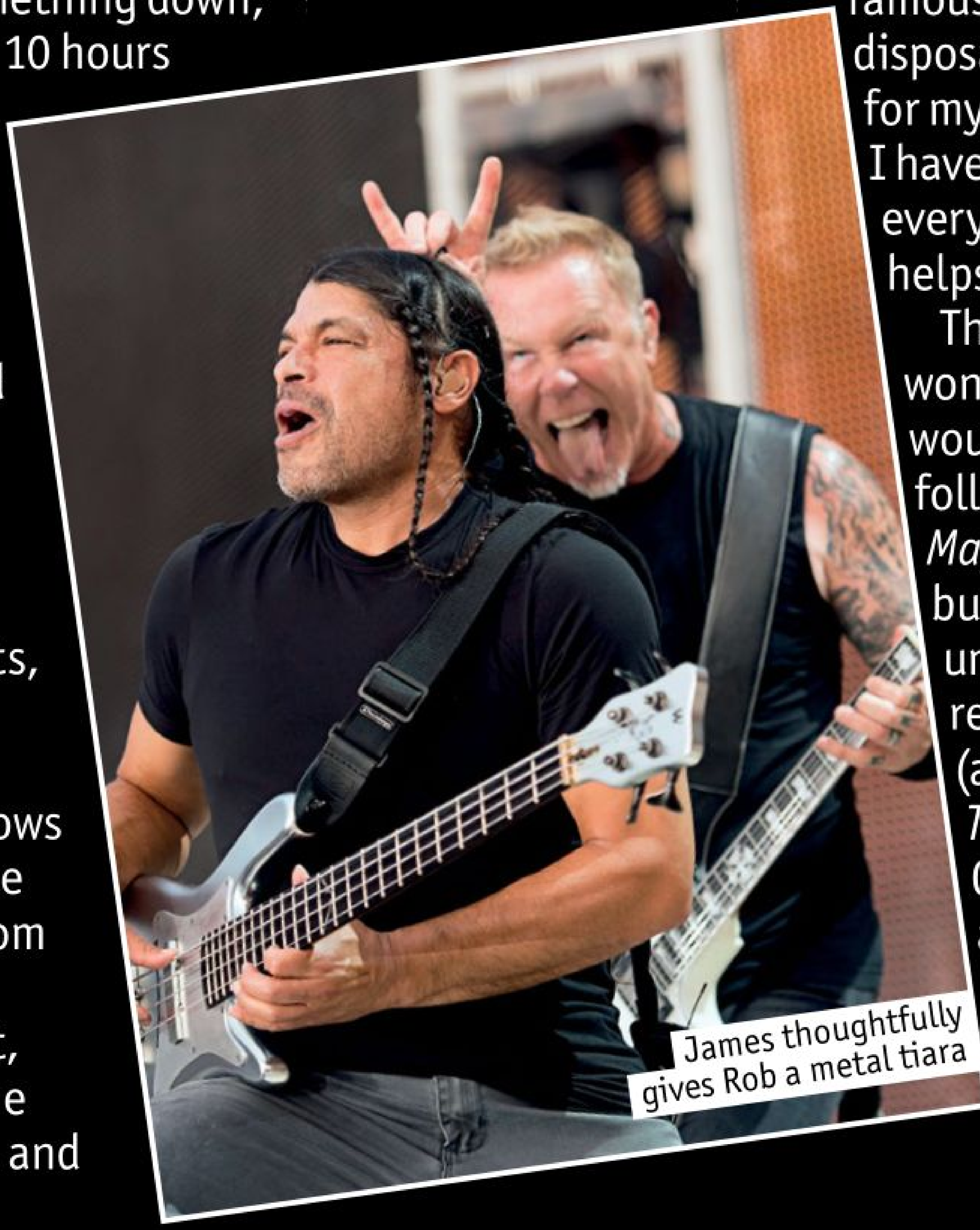
"We don't need to go to dinner [together] every night; we don't need to hang out; we don't need to wake up and text good morning, and go to sleep and say goodnight; but we need to get along and have a nice, civil time."

Before arriving at Rogers Centre this afternoon, Lars has been spending his free time in Toronto with his wife, model Jessica Miller, while guitarist Kirk Hammett has kept busy by scouring local shops in hopes of adding to his collection of vintage horror movie posters. There's currently an exhibition featuring 150 of what he calls his "best pieces" on display at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, where the infamous witch trials took place 325 years ago.

"When you 'base', you feel like you have some sort of foundation," Kirk says. "You know that when you set something down, you don't have to pack it up 10 hours later. It's great, because you can actually feel a little bit grounded, rather than wondering, 'What city am I in? What day is it? When you're moving around like that, it can be very disorientating."

These days, the group typically tour in leisurely paced, two-week increments, followed by two weeks off at home. They also limit themselves to around 50 shows a year. Still, Kirk says that he doesn't like to drift away from the stage for too long.

"To be completely honest, I'm a mental waste-case," he says. "I have mental issues, and anger is one of them. What really, really helps me is music, and playing music, and going out there onstage. What people don't understand is the anger, the angst, the anxiety, the frustration – all those various feelings and emotions that are attached to our music – are feelings that live in us, and have been there since the beginning. Just because you become famous or you have a little bit of disposable income, that's not a cure for my inner anger. I have to deal with my inner anger every single fucking day, and music helps that."



James thoughtfully gives Rob a metal tiara

"I HAVE ANGER ISSUES EVERY SINGLE FUCKING DAY"

KIRK HAS HAD TO USE MUSIC AS A WAY TO DEAL WITH HIS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

There was a time when fans wondered whether this tour would happen at all. In the years following the release of *Death Magnetic* in 2008, Metallica busied themselves with the universally panned *Lulu*, released the 3D concert film (and box office bomb) *Through The Never*, curated the failed Orion Music + More festivals and played a bunch of one-off shows, with an occasional tour sprinkled in for good measure.

It was a long, eight-year wait for *Hardwired…*, and the question on everyone's lips was: can they still cut it? Almost a year later, with critical acclaim and chart successes under their belt, Lars is proudof the album and feels it's ageing better than some of its siblings.

"When you make records, there's a point where you start asking questions – 'Why did we do that?' 'What were we thinking?' 'What frame of mind was I in?' Most of the time when you ask the 'Why?' question, it comes from a critical place," he says.

"[With *Hardwired…*], there's none of those questions yet. I really have no issues or faults with it. I played along to a few songs in my home studio to warm up before we started on this leg, and I thought the record still sounded incredible, [even though] it's coming up on a year. That's a long time, and for some of our other records, there were a few of those 'Why?' questions that showed up earlier than a year."

Every night on this tour, the band play five new songs as part of a setlist that typically comprises 18 tracks performed with surgical precision – 19, if you include an instrumental jam between Kirk and bassist Robert Trujillo.

Even better, the *Hardwired…* material sits comfortably alongside the classics.

"They fit right in," Kirk says. "The flow between the new songs and the older songs, which is usually a good barometer as to how well they're liked and how well they work live, is pretty seamless in terms of audience reaction.

"That's always a great thing, because that means they like what they're hearing."

Yet another explosive set for the metal titans

"IT'S SOME PEOPLE'S FIRST METALLICA SHOW TONIGHT. THAT'S A MIND-FUCK!"

LARS CAN'T BELIEVE METALLICA ARE STILL BRINGING IN NEW FANS

"Do you want heavy?" a battle vest-clad James Hetfield asks a packed Rogers Centre four hours later. "Metallica gives you heavy, Toronto!"

As the audience roar in approval, the group launches into *Sad But True* for what the song statistics page of the band's website says is the 1,218th time (it's the seventh most-performed song in the group's catalogue). Even though they could surely play the track in their sleep by now, it sounds absolutely colossal tonight – a sneering, primal war stomp that makes 52,000 heads bob reflexively.

It's far from the only highlight of the band's 140-minute performance. With the crowd warmed up by support acts Volbeat and Avenged Sevenfold, Metallica open with a one-two punch of new material via *Hardwired* and *Atlas, Rise!*. Just as Kirk says in the tuning room, the response to the new songs is overwhelmingly positive, but when the band subsequently turn back the clock with *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, the crowd go even more ballistic.

Up next is *Fuel*, which is punctuated by eight giant columns of flames that, according to a fact sheet supplied by the band's publicist, each emit 10 times more heat than the average home barbecue grill. Notably, it's the only song aired tonight from the often-controversial years between *The Black Album* and *Hardwired*..., which makes this truly an all-killer, no-filler performance that, thanks to five, 50-foot video screens sandwiched between giant inflatables of the M and A from the band's logo, feels larger than life.

After *The Unforgiven* provides a temporary breather, Metallica deliver another double-shot from *Hardwired* – *Now That We're Dead*, which features a memorable Taiko drum circle jam and perhaps the band's best riff in a quarter-century, and *Moth Into Flame*, which sees the stage stalked by what might be best described as a fiery shark fin. Both prove to be genuine highlights – no small order when your competition includes capital-C classics such as *One* and *Wherever I May Roam*.

Following a blazing rendition of *Hit The Lights* – the first song the band ever wrote – James asks for a show of hands from "the first-timers in the Metallica family". After a good third of the audience raises their arms, he pauses for a moment to take in the sight.

"It's pretty amazing that there's still some new people coming in to see Metallica, man," he says. "Young, old, medium... medium-aged? What is that?"

Lars hasn't found fault with *Hardwired... To Self Destruct*

Backstage earlier in the day, Lars says he's stunned by the number of young people he's seen in the crowd on this tour.

"A lot of people say that people love to come back to songs that have shaped their lives – 'I grew up listening to Metallica when I was 15, so they hold a dear place in my heart at 35 or 45 or 55,'" he says. "That's a fine theory, except the mind-fuck of mind-fucks is that half the people in the audience [on this tour] are 15, and it's their first Metallica show. That's the craziest thing – the turnover. There still feels like there's this organic thing happening."

Later, Papa Het calls out a young fan who's sandwiched against the barricade. "How old are you – 13?", he asks. "And you're in the front row? Who are you with – your dad? You and your dad came to Metallica? That's fucking cool!" Lars then offers another young fan the ultimate heavy metal rite of passage by extending an invitation to come onstage, sit behind his kit ➤

No monsters in sight: Metallica are happy in each other's company these days

With Iron Maiden's Steve Harris.

and count off the intro to *Seek & Destroy*.

As they perform the song, the band admirably manage to make a stadium show feel intimate. "We're recreating the garage. That's exactly how it was in 1883 when we started!" James quips, as the band gather around a second drumkit that's magically risen from below the circular catwalk surrounding the 'Snake Pit', where 200-300 fans chosen by lottery (and for a few songs tonight, guitarist Rob Caggiano of openers Volbeat) stand shoulder-to-shoulder directly in front of centre stage. During the song, a ticket stub from the band's inaugural Toronto appearance is projected on the video screens – a nice personal touch for the hometown crowd.

After *Enter Sandman* – still as potent as ever – brings a three-song encore to a close, an impressive fireworks display ties a celebratory bow on an epic performance.

As the smoke clears, the band are whisked away to an afterparty at a local restaurant with their tour mates in Avenged Sevenfold and Volbeat (Gojira will replace Volbeat for the second half of the tour). It's a drastically different undercard from the band's last North American stadium tour 14 years ago, when they were supported by Limp Bizkit, Linkin Park and Mudvayne.

"We've played a lot of shows with Avenged over the years. We've played a lot of shows with Volbeat. These are people that we know very well; these are people that we've championed," says Lars. "Some bands [we've toured with] may not have been judged by history with the same kindness as others, but I can look you in the eye and go, 'There's nobody that's played a Metallica stage that we did not at that particular time endorse and support.' I think as we get older, though, we like to have bands with us that are part of the family."

Still, there remains a huge gulf between Metallica, the rest of their family and beyond. On a global level, only Iron Maiden, AC/DC and Guns N' Roses can consistently pack stadiums like tonight's, and of those, the future of AC/DC is uncertain, while the jury's still out on how long of a honeymoon the GN'R reunion will continue to enjoy. It's a topic that Metallica ended up discussing with Iron Maiden last night, when they were hanging out after Maiden's gig at a Toronto amphitheater.

"One thing that came up a couple of times is that there aren't many bands left," Lars says. "Black Sabbath have sort of politely, respectfully exited; you've got AC/DC; you've got Iron Maiden; you've got Judas Priest. We appreciate more than anybody will truly ever understand the position that we somehow inadvertently ended up in. We're proud; we're appreciative; we're humbled; and we'll be at the leading edge of the cavalry and charge forward with the best intent."

Kirk hopes that Metallica's tour mates can continue to grow and prosper, but worries about the state of the genre when the band finally fade to black.

"It's important for me that there are bands like that coming up, but I haven't seen the momentum," he says. "Is it the record company? Is it the fans? Is it the band? I don't know, but fuck, man – it seems like time's running out on us. I want someone to listen to. I want someone to rally for. I want someone to cheer on. Do it, man – upset the fuckin' masses. Piss people off. Make some great fuckin' entertainment, and make some exciting music so that I can tell my kids, 'See this band, boys? Aren't they fuckin' great? They're the band that dad thinks are the right band to take dad's band's place.'"

Until then, the Metallica train will continue moving full speed ahead. In October, they hit five arenas around the UK for their first proper tour here in eight years. Unlike tonight's mega-performance, it's going to be in the round, giving us the chance to get up close and personal with The Four Horsemen – somewhat like being in the tuning room, only with a bigger

"THE UK SHOWS ARE GOING TO BE MUCH MORE INTIMATE"

KIRK'S LOOKING FORWARD TO GETTING UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH THEIR UK SET

SUM KIND – OF – MONSTER

The WorldWired tour in numbers

54,000
The number of guitar picks that the band will toss out during the WorldWired tour

0 The number we caught in Toronto

48 The number of trucks required to carry the stage set and equipment from city to city

83 The number of laser fixtures used in the tour's production

640
The number of hours that it took to program the lasers

0.01 The number of seconds it took for us to marvel at how cool they were

1 The number of slices of chocolate layer cake we scarfed down in catering when no one was looking

9,000,000
The total amount of lumens (a unit used to measure the intensity of light) that the tour's production utilises

1,600
The number of lumens in the average light bulb

5.45 The combined length, in miles, of cables that are used to connect and power the tour each night

1 Distance in miles from *Hammer's* hotel room to the Rogers Centre

2 Members of Anvil we spotted backstage

3 The number of times James Hetfield says 'famileh' in his speeches before *For Whom The Bell Tolls* and *Sad But True*

All that time hanging out with Maiden has had an effect on the guys…

audience and a lot more pyro.

"The summer stadium tour is outdoor, and more like a heavy metal picnic, whereas the arena tour is going to be much more intimate," explains Kirk. "When we're on a smaller stage, it's closer to real life and how we really play our instruments together in a room, so of course it's going to feel more comfortable. We're able to interact more with each other and the audience."

They'll continue to tour throughout 2018, hitting Scandinavia and western Europe in the first half of the year, and are already thinking about their plans beyond this cycle. Fans irritated with their recent diversions into films and other extracurricular activities will be heartened to hear that music remains their present focus.

"The one thing we've had a couple conversations about is the length of time between *Death Magnetic* and *Hardwired…*, which was eight years," Lars says. "We'd like to see if we can beat that. Obviously, that space had a lot to do with the Lou Reeds of the world, the 3D movies of the world, the Orion festivals of the world and all the other auxiliary projects – which we love doing, and which is a big part of us staying creatively fulfilled. But we've had a couple conversations about getting back to recording and being creative again sooner than later."

In a candid acknowledgment few superstar acts would make, Kirk says he understands why many fans were frustrated by those secondary projects, but he predicts that in time, they'll come back around. "I think for as much as people have issues with us, after a while, they say, 'Alright, they're not perfect – they don't make all the best decisions at all the right times, but they're only human.' We're doing the best we can, and doing the things we feel are healthiest for our art, our music and our creativity," he says. "When we do something or exhibit behaviour that might be contrary to what people think we are, they get mad – but whether they're pissed at us for one day, one week, one month or one year, eventually they're going to be driving their car, and *Master Of Puppets* comes on, and they're like, 'Fuck yeah!' That's what brings them back."

Having already played every continent, Kirk says he'd love to someday perform aboard the International Space Station. Lars, meanwhile, mentions wanting to play Coachella. In the meantime, they and their bandmates will enjoy the feeling of having the wind at their backs as they circle the world in support of their best-reviewed album in years – another jewel in the crown of metal's undisputed world champions.

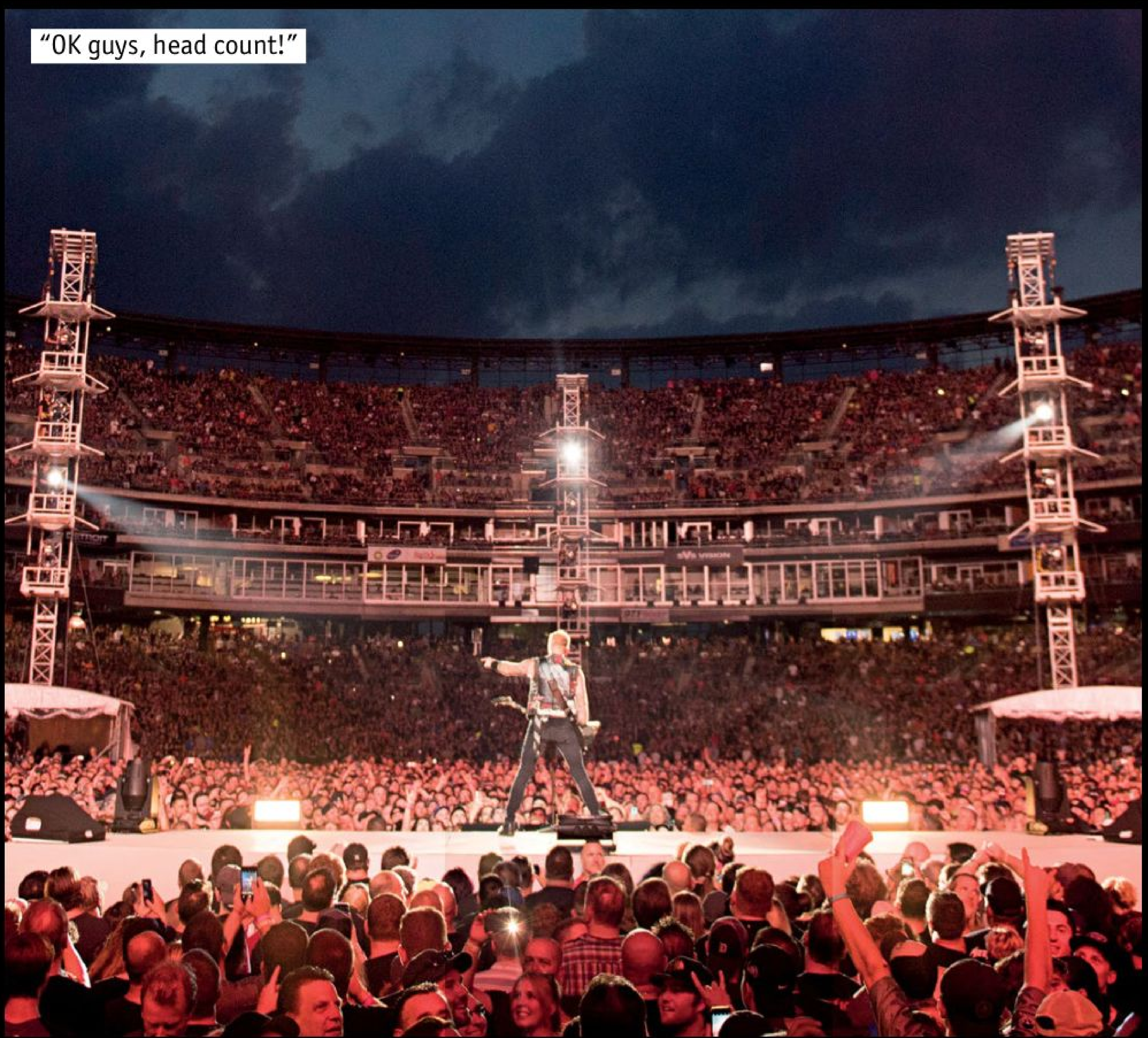
"What's difficult sometimes to comprehend is why one record connects at one level and another record connects at a different level," says Lars. "Lots of critics are saying lots of nice things, but I've also been in Metallica where lots of people are not saying very nice things, so you try to not get too attached to either outcome.

"I think the main difference now is appreciating that we still have this ability to connect when we play music. It's that X factor – certain bands, put 'em in a room together and it still fires up. [For us], it still *absolutely* fires up. Hopefully it will keep doing that for some time, and hopefully when it doesn't, we'll be the first ones to acknowledge that it's not, and respectfully walk away." ✠

"WE'RE GONNA RECORD AGAIN SOONER THAN LATER"

METALLICA WON'T BE TAKING ANOTHER EIGHT YEARS TO MAKE THEIR NEXT ALBUM

***HARDWIRED… TO SELF-DESTRUCT* IS OUT NOW VIA BLACKENED RECORDINGS. METALLICA TOUR**



"OK guys, head count!"

"WE STILL HAVE THAT X FACTOR"

LARS SAYS METALLICA WILL KEEP GOING FOR AS LONG AS THE CHEMISTRY REMAINS

"What do you mean, acoustic?!"

ALL WITHIN MY HANDS

Metallica's foundation supports US and international charities

On 3 November 2018 Metallica performed at the All Within My Hands Foundation Helping Hands Concert & Auction at The Masonic Auditorium in San Francisco, California, US. The band created the foundation in 2017 to help benefit sustainable communities, promote workforce education, tackle hunger and support critical local services in both the US and internationally. This inaugural event raised over $1.3 million, 100 per cent of which will go to causes the foundation supports. Metallica played an acoustic set, supported by Cage The Elephant.

THE A-Z OF METALLICA

Your alphabetical guide to Metallica

Words: **Paul Brannigan**

A is for Alcoholica
It's no exaggeration to say that if it wasn't for alcohol, there almost certainly would never have been a Metallica, with the super-introverted James Hetfield leaning heavily on booze from day one in order to conquer his stage fright and crippling shyness. But as Hetfield later noted, the Alcoholica tag "turned from fun into destruction: it started to take over us." Hetfield's subsequent admission into rehab circa *St. Anger* saved his band, his marriage and quite possibly his life.

B is for Burton
Though taken from this world in tragic circumstances on September 27, 1986, Clifford Lee Burton aka 'The Legend in Loon Pants', will always be part of Metallica. That James Hetfield, Dave Mustaine and Lars Ulrich were prepared to uproot from Los Angeles to San Francisco purely to make Burton part of their band speaks volumes about the bassist's charisma and talent, and his musicianship, compositional skills and creative fearlessness helped transform a scrappy garage band into a genuinely world class outfit. He will be forever missed.

C is for Covers
From 1987's *$5.98 EP* (Jason Newsted's first recording with the band) to 1998's *Garage Inc.* collection through to their 2012 cover of Deep Purple's *When A Blind Man Cries* (exclusively covered for a *Classic Rock* fan-pack magazine), Metallica have never been shy of paying tribute to their influences.

D is for Doris
The crumbling centre-piece of Metallica's *...And Justice For All* stage-set, Doris aka 'Lady Justice' was one of the 'stars' of the *Through The Never* film, and was subsequently broken up into chunks and given away with a special deluxe edition of the movie on DVD.

E is for Ednas
'Edna' was Metallica slang for any young lady willing to spend time, and share bodily fluids with, band or crew members.

F is for Fade To Black
Metallica's first ballad (accompanied, inevitably, by the first accusations that they'd "sold out"), dealt with themes of suicide, helplessness and despair, and was originally inspired by the theft of the band's gear in Boston in January 1984. "I'm sure I wasn't really thinking of killing myself," James Hetfield noted, "but it was my favourite Marshall amp!"

G is for Glastonbury
Yeah, this happened. Just another crushing day at the office for the biggest metal band in the world. The bespoke 'Glastallica' T-shirt and specially-commissioned Julian Temple intro film were works of genius, though.

H is for Hetfield and Hammett
Gorham and Robertson. Smith and Murray. Tipton and Downing. Not a 'twin' guitar team in the classic sense, Hetfield and Hammett are nonetheless one of the most formidable and well-respected duos in six string science.

I is for I Disappear
Recorded at the personal request of *M:i-2* star Tom Cruise, *I Disappear,* Metallica's first ever contribution to a Hollywood film soundtrack, sparked off Lars Ulrich's epic, much-misunderstood battle with Napster after it illegally appeared on the platform.

J is for Junior Dad
At 19 minutes 29 seconds long, the closing track of *Lulu*, Metallica's controversial collaboration with Lou Reed is the longest piece of music Metallica have ever recorded. It's also the first Metallica song to reduce both Kirk Hammett and James Hetfield to tears.

K is for Kill 'Em All
They may have been forced to back down from their original plan to call it Metal Up Your Ass, but Metallica's debut album was otherwise compromise-free. On the first day of the session producer Paul Curcio pulled James Hetfield aside and informed him that the sound coming from his Marshall amp didn't sound 'normal': "It's not meant to sound normal," Hetfield spat back.

L is for Load
The haircuts! The guy-liner! The blood-and-semen artwork! When Metallica's sixth album emerged in 1996 it was accompanied by howls of protest. It's better than you remember, honest.

M is for Mustaine
On the morning of April 11, 1983 Dave Mustaine was rudely awoken by James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, and Cliff Burton and informed that he was no longer a member of Metallica. It was a brutal exit for the guitarist who'd contributed much to the band's early sound, and was viewed by many at the time as the group's de facto leader.

N is for Newsted
With hindsight, it's easy to see why, but jeez, in the early days of his time in the band, Metallica were absolute dicks to 'Newkid' Jason Newsted. One hilarious 'wheeze' found Metallica informing the media that their new bassist was gay, another saw them charge thousands of dollars worth of drinks to the hapless new recruit's hotel room. When Newsted walked out of the band in January 17, 2001, his exit precipitated a psychological meltdown for his former friends.

O is for Orion
Using the title of Cliff Burton's classically-informed instrumental masterpiece as the name of their own bespoke music festival was a nice touch from Metallica. For all the goodwill and positive press generated by the event however, after just two stagings, Orion is now effectively dead in the water. "It's been a disaster financially," James Hetfield admitted bluntly. "Right now, it seems like metal is struggling a little bit in the States."

P is for Paradise Lost
In licensing their music to *Paradise Lost*, Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky's documentary about the West Memphis Three, Metallica threw their weight behind the campaign to have the convictions of Damian Echols, Jason Baldwin and Jesse Misskelley Jr, three Arkansas teenagers accused of the murder of three eight year old boys, over-turned. In 2011, after 18 years in jail, the three young men finally walked free.

Q is for Quintana
Ulrich's friend Ron Quintana was searching for a title for his new fanzine around the same time as the thrash band sought a name. The canny drummer duly advised Quintana to go with the name *Metal Mania*, while filing away the next suggestion on his pal's list – Metallica – for his own use.

R is for Riots
Cliff Burton never left home without his trusty hammer and, during a tension-filled gig in Finland on the Ride The Lightning tour, Burton dispersed a rioting crowd of pissed-off teenagers by wading into their midst swinging his hammer like a vengeful hippy Thor.

S is for Some Kind Of Monster
One of the greatest music documentaries ever made.

T is for 'Tub Tarts'
'Tub tarts' was the not terribly PC name given to any adventurous young female who wished to prolong an evening with Metallica by joining the band for a post-gig shower. Recalled Kirk Hammett: "I remember one time I turned the corner and there were at least 30 women in there..."

U is for Ulrich
Aka The Little Prince. Would Metallica have amounted to anything without the driving ambition, networking ability and sheer bloody-minded work ethic of the young Lars Ulrich?

V is for Video
Despite MTV's undoubted ability to break metal bands into the mainstream, Metallica refused to shoot a promo video for any of the songs from *Kill 'Em All, Ride The Lightning or Master Of Puppets*, only finally giving in for *One*...

W is for Whiplash
"Bang your head against the stage like you never did before. Make it ring, make it bleed, make it really sore..." Metallica have written more sophisticated songs, but as mission statements go, this paean to the unadulterated thrill of pure heavy fucking metal is hard to top.

X is for X-Rated
November 1996 and Metallica appear alongside the likes of George Michael, Boyzone and Simply Red at the MTV Europe Music Awards, treating a watching television audience in the tens of millions to a cover of the Anti-Nowhere League's *So What*. "I fucked a sheep, I fucked a goat, I rammed my cock right down its throat" sang a beaming James Hetfield above the sound of MTV executives' jaws bouncing off the venue floor. Priceless.

Y is for Yea-Yuhhh!
We're just going to leave this one here...

Z is for Zazula, Jonny
Metallica's first manager was a New Jersey record store owner who re-mortaged his house to start Megaforce Records for the express purpose of releasing *Kill 'Em All* when no label in the world showed the slightest interest in the noisy Californians. Should you ever stumble across him, buy that man a pint from us.

GETTY X4

38 YEARS OF THE METAL MILITIA

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